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INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

ISSUE 43
MAY 1996

EXCLUSIVE!

NINTENDO 64
Final launch date and first games revealed!

KILLER INSTINCT 2
- Destined for your SNES
- Coin-op review inside...

AURAL PLEASURE
Game music – tune in or turn off?

FINAL FIGHT VS FRONT MISSION

Fists against mecha – the sequels square up!

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LIVE FROM HELL CITY ● P20
All the latest arcade action from the AOU in Japan.

FANTASY QUEST ● P18
An in-depth look at Bahamut Lagoon and more.

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INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

MAY ISSUE 43

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Super Play comes from the same office as *Sega Power*, *GamesMaster*, *The Official PlayStation Magazine*, *Edge* and *Total!*, and we're friends with *Amiga Power*, *CD-ROM Today*, *Amiga Format*, *PC Format*, *PC Gamer*, *.net*, *Arcane* and *SFX*.

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Phone the Nintendo Hotline (01703) 652222 instead. It's their job, you see. If you must call *Super Play*, do it on Thursdays only, between 2pm and 6pm.

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Future PUBLISHING

THE SUPER PLAY EDITORIAL

from the BIG CHAIR

Our full contents listing starts just over the page

Without giving too much away too soon, we've had a nerve-wracking month. We've had a bit of a harrowing time claiming our fair share of floorage in the big office move. Now that *Total!* have invaded our space, we have to put up with their whinging ways and envious glances in our direction at our spacious and ultra-modern surroundings with plants and everything. Will kindly brought in his book on Feng Sheung, so that even our furniture is now arranged to maximise harmony and creativity. Top stuff.

Other great news is that *Super Play* has a brand-new Deputy Editor. His name is Sean Atkins. He's worked his way up from *Total!* magazine to *Ultimate* to us. He likes Woody Allen and harbours an unspeakable dislike of self-raising flour. Well, one in usually means one out, and it is with great sorrow that we have had to lose our Tony, who's moved on to the mighty *Edge* magazine.

But enough of the office gossip… the Nintendo 64 now has an official release date in Japan. But don't think I'm going to give the game away – turn to our lead news feature. Elsewhere we've got a rather splendiferous game music feature and a brand new arcade column. Top games abound with the addictive-as-Iced Gems puzzler *Panel de Pon* and the sure-fire smash *Toy Story*. Elsewhere, it's Sequel Central with this month's cover games. Turn to the reviews section to find out what we make of *Front Mission: Gun Hazard* and *Final Fight Tough*. There are plenty surprises in store…

Alison Harper
Editor

INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

CON

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GAMES REVIEWED THIS ISSUE

FRONT MISSION: Gun Hazard
● p44

Does *Gun Hazard* live up to the all-round greatness of the first *Front Mission*?

FINAL FIGHT TOUGH
● p50

A seemingly action-packed beat-'em-up – but is it all it's cracked up to be?

KI2 ARCADE

page 28

This month's surprise hit. Highly addictive and sure to set your heart racing...

PANEL DE PON
● p54

ABC: 23,657*
*You'll only be able to read this bit if your eyesight is exceptionally good

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ISSUE 43
MAY
1996

GAME MUSIC

Super Play rounds up the best in game music and asks whether when it comes to game music it's more a case of turn off than turn on. Plus an EXCLUSIVE interview with game music maestro Tim Follin.

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Find out how *Front Mission: Gun Hazard* and *Final Fight Tough* fare in the sequel war...

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TOUGH GIRLS COME OUT TO PLAY!

TOY STORY

page 38

3

Discover what the makers of *Toy Story* the video game have to say for themselves...

First UK SNES review!

FANTASY QUEST

page 18

Six new Square games, including *Bahamut Lagoon*, come under *Super Play*'s scrutiny...

SUPER

NEWS NETWORK SUPER NINTENDO NEWS NETWORK SUPER NINTENDO

This month, inspired by "Why is it...?" (see page 10) we all took a trip down that old Lane known as Memory and got carried away by the television heroes of our respective childhoods. Just who did the *Super Play* team want to be when they were kids...?

PROFILES

Alison Harper

I was obsessed with *Tarzan*. Who could resist those glistening biceps, a chest most girls would kill for and the ability to dive into a swamp, wrestle with a crocodile and still stroll out – not a hair out of place – ready to snog me, erm I mean Jane. Yes, you guessed it – I wanted to be Jane and still do, if truth be known.

Ollie Alderton

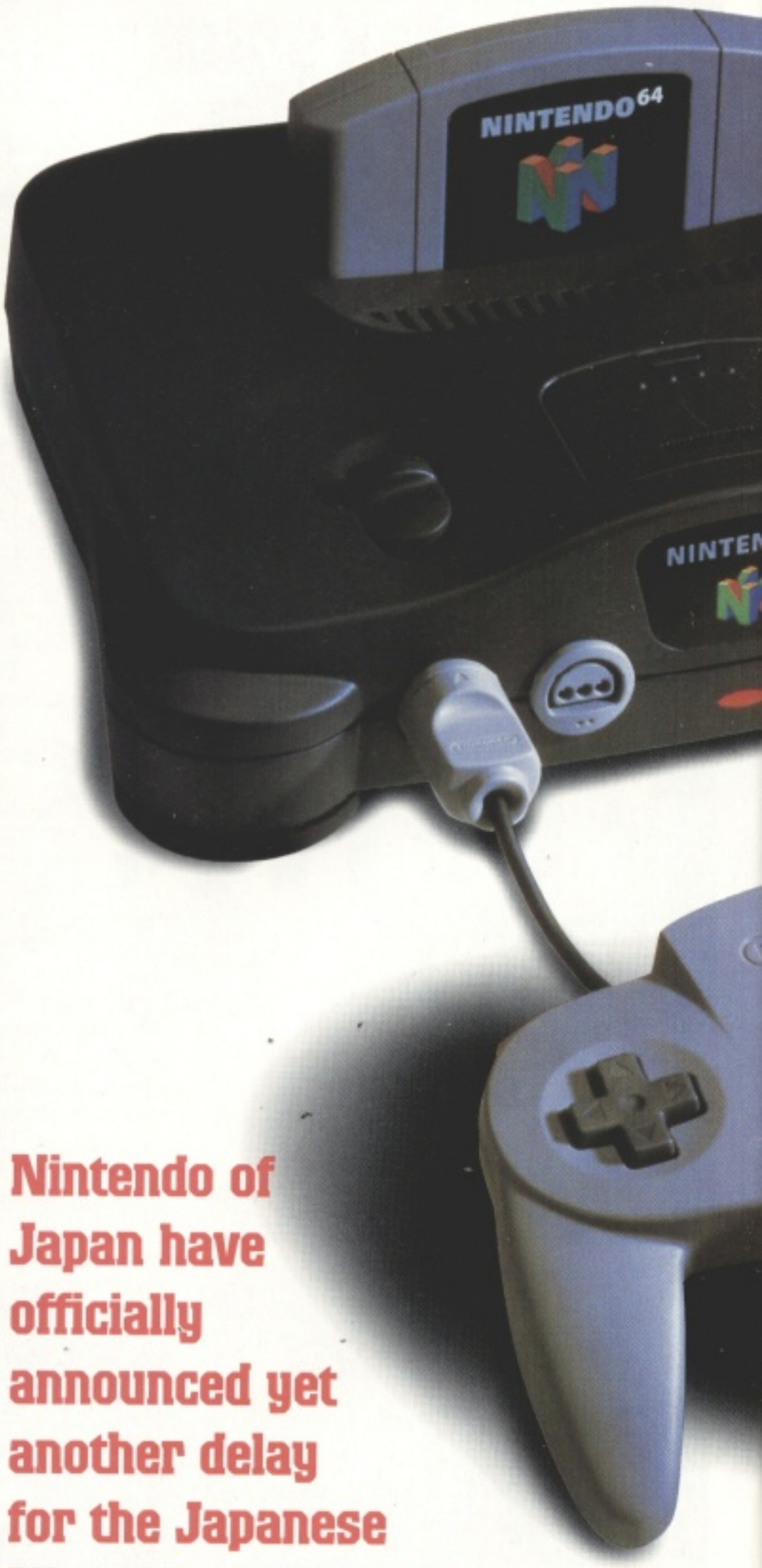
I always wanted to be *Popeye*. Not that tatty cinema version starring Robin Williams and a half hundredweight of latex though. Oh no, the original cartoon one complete with forearms bigger than mine. His bird Olive looked as though she needed a few of my mum's Sunday roasts in her though. Way too skinny.

Sean Atkins

I couldn't get enough of The *Invisible Man*. What a top talent, but why didn't he wander into girls' changing rooms? This wouldn't be a very interesting photo if I pretended to be him so I found the next best thing – stupidly skinny man. Oi! I'm talking about the one on the right. Good grief, some people!

Wil Overton

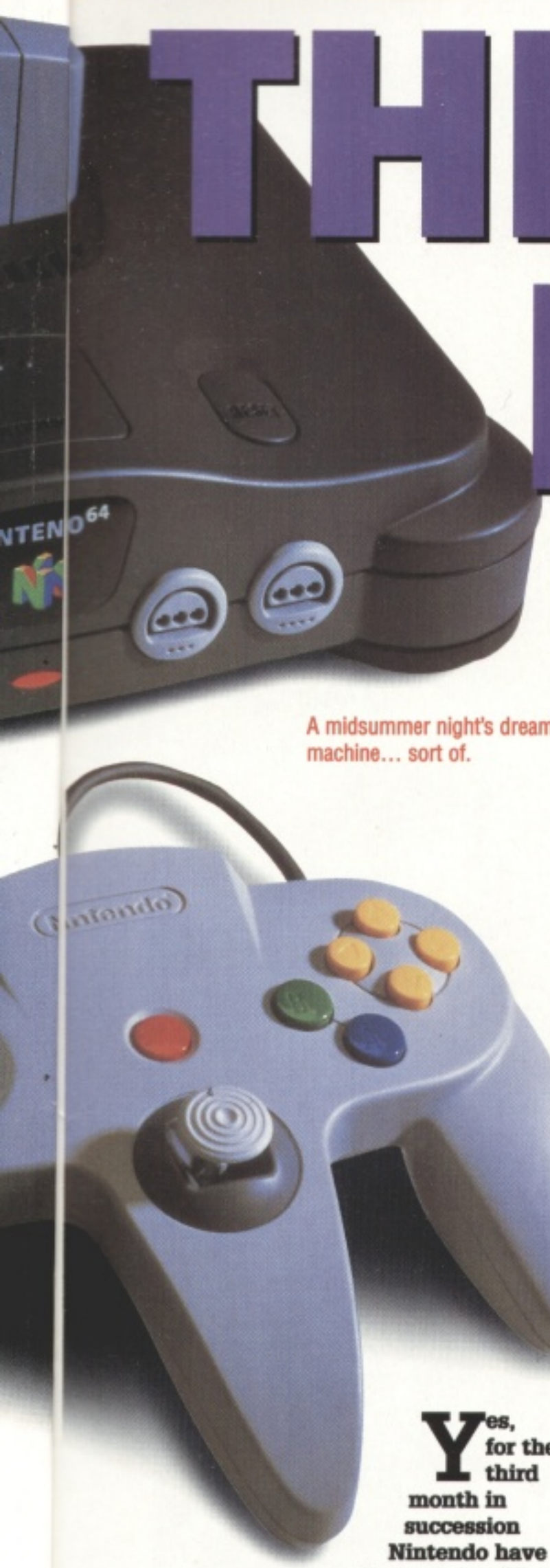
I must admit to having a bit of a weakness for *The Fall Guy*. Lee Majors was a big hit with the ladies and his character was a stuntman. That's an even cooler job than playing top notch SNES games all day! Why the picture of Bomberman? Because I got it today and I'm childishly pleased with it.



Nintendo of Japan have officially announced yet another delay for the Japanese Nintendo 64. What? No! You must be joking! Would you believe it!?! To cushion the blow Nintendo swear that this time it's for real...

EXPRESS

THE FINAL DELAY?



A midsummer night's dream machine... sort of.

Yes, for the third month in succession Nintendo have changed the official release date for the Nintendo 64. This, according to Howard Lincoln, should be the last change and will only affect the Japanese machine. Hmm...

The Japanese launch date will now be June 23rd, two months later than the earlier anticipated April 21st. For once, Nintendo have come clean and given us reasons for the delay. According to a statement made by Mr Arakawa and Howard Lincoln: "The reason for this slight delay is two-fold: there have been supply limitations on the chips because we are using state-of-the-art technology which only an SGI-licensed foundry can produce; and Mr Miyamoto has requested an extra few weeks to fine-tune his already spectacular software."

It has also been confirmed that the system will launch with three games: *Mario 64*, *Pilotwings 64* and *Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi* (see Seta Surprise... below). Nintendo will begin displaying hardware in Japanese stores from June 1st to tease Japanese consumers into a rabid frenzy. That shouldn't be difficult.

Nintendo of America have assured US gamers that this delay will not affect the planned September 30th US launch, but all is not as simple as that. The shortage of semi-conductors is, according to a source, likely to be more long-term than Nintendo envisage. This could lead to all available chips being used to satisfy the huge demand in Japan while the US and European markets play the waiting game – again. The next major announcement will be at E3 in May where North American software plans will be revealed. Don't be surprised to read another delay story within the next couple of months.

"Er...Mr Yamaguchi sir. I've not finished yet. Can you annoy the entire world again? Pleeeeeeese!"

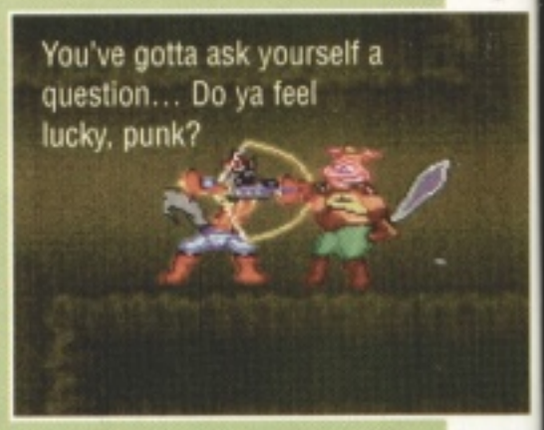
SETA SURPRISE WITH LAUNCH TITLE

The biggest surprise to come out of Nintendo's announcement (let's face it, Nintendo 64 delays don't rock the gaming world any more) was that one of the Japanese launch titles will be the previously unheard of *Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi* by Seta (best known for middling racing games such as *Exhaust Heat*). Not the snappiest title in the world or the sexiest genre, but hear it out...

Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi is based on the popular Japanese board game Shogi – a variation on chess. The objective is the same – trap your opponent's king – but the method is a little odd. Still, 20 million people can't be wrong. Without boring you into a coma (we are trying to sell magazines here) the main difference is that you can re-use the pieces that you've captured from your opponent. Other than that the game is played on a 9 X 9 board and sounds a bit dull, if you ask us – which the Japanese didn't because they have absolutely no plans to release *Habu Nanakano no Saikyo Habu Shogi* in the western world.

So why the long title if it's just a Shogi game? Because it features Yoshiharu Habu, a famous Shogi player who has reached celebrity status since his engagement to one of Japan's most popular actresses, that's why. It does seem a strange choice for a launch title, but we suspect that Nintendo are gagging for any finished titles they can get their hands on at the moment and a chess game was never going to be the lengthiest programming task in the world. We'll have shots next month.

PIG POWER



Where's me washboard?

Power Piggs Of The Dark Age

Titus ● 16Mbits

It's good to see that the latest (and possibly last) Dream Team members, Titus, haven't let their new-found status prevent them from releasing SNES titles. *Power Piggs* will be the first of about seven games planned by the French owned company for '96, and it's not looking bad.

Clearly aimed at the younger SNES player, *Power Piggs* is a sizeable side-scrolling platformer of the same ilk as, well, the other thousand side-scrolling platformers out there. Based on a popular French cartoon, the plot concerns the exploits of a pig named Bruno, one of three proprietors of a donut shop, and his sword-wielding quest to rid the world of wolves dressed as princesses. Odd.

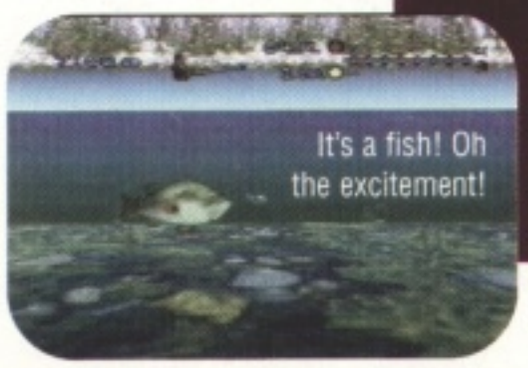
At the moment the graphics appear to be passable, while the gameplay actually caused appreciative chuckles in the office. We'll have a full review next month.

The first boss is a Silk Cut smoking, wooden dragon's head.

BASS MASTERS CLASSIC: PRO EDITION

Boasting characters that young gamers will really relate to.

Last year's *Bass Masters Classic* was developed in conjunction with the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society and subsequently was one of the most realistic fishing games ever created. (Does this mean you could sit in front of your telly all day and not catch anything?) This new improved version, due sometime in the summer, is pretty much the same with the addition of six top pro anglers, larger lakes and two divisions of gameplay. Anyway, here are a couple of exclusive shots...



PORTABLE SNES?

News is just breaking from Japan on the emergence of a 'real' successor to the Game Boy from Nintendo (the Virtual Boy didn't exactly fly off the shelves, did it?).

Rumours of a new handheld system have been circulating in the Japanese press and flooding bulletin boards on the internet for nearly a week – at the time of going to press – but, as yet, Nintendo are remaining characteristically tight-lipped on the subject. The speculation is divided into two camps at the moment. There are those who swear that we are finally going to see a portable SNES unit, which makes a lot of sense and would certainly sell stupid amounts while re-igniting the SNES' back catalogue. And there are others who are certain that the new handheld will be of the 32-bit variety while at the same time ditching the 3D element and thereby not isolating the player.

Can it be true? Reckon so!

Whatever the answer is (we'll all know by next month), most agree that the unit will be slightly bulkier than the present Game Boy and should come in at a price point of around $100-$150. More on this as we hear it...

INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

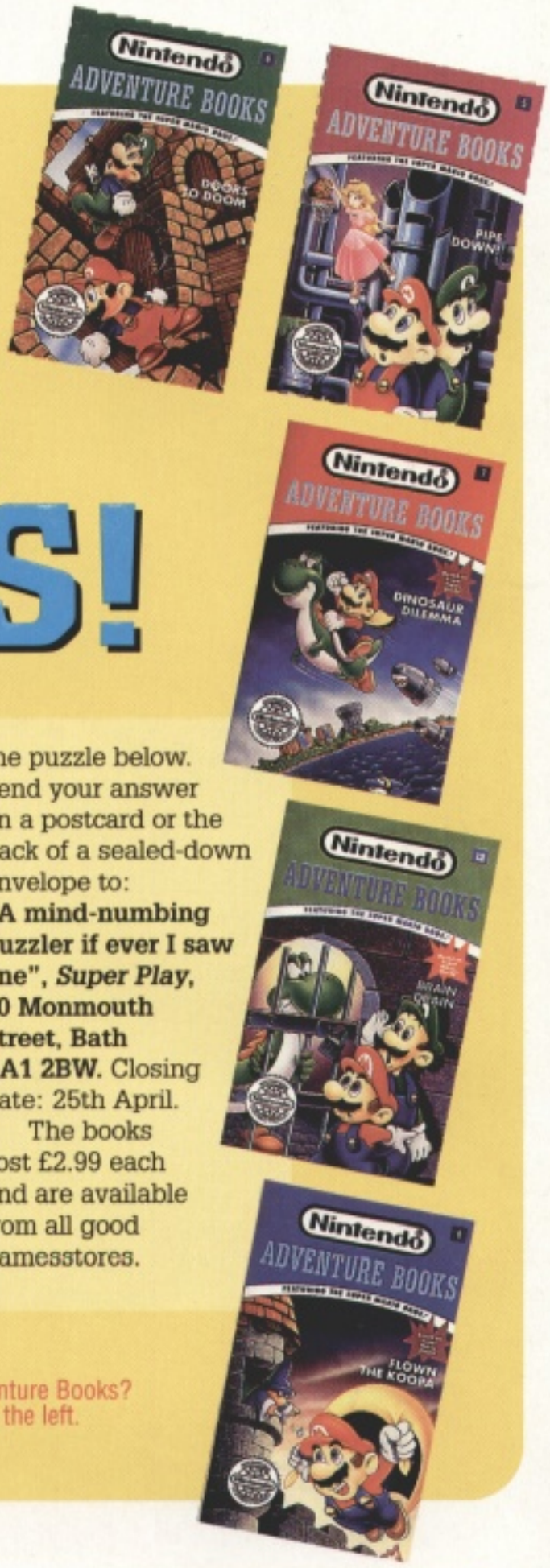
~~the times they are a — changing~~

at times they are annoying

~~- 3 months and counting~~

- 5 months and counting

WIN MARIO ADVENTURE GAME BOOKS!



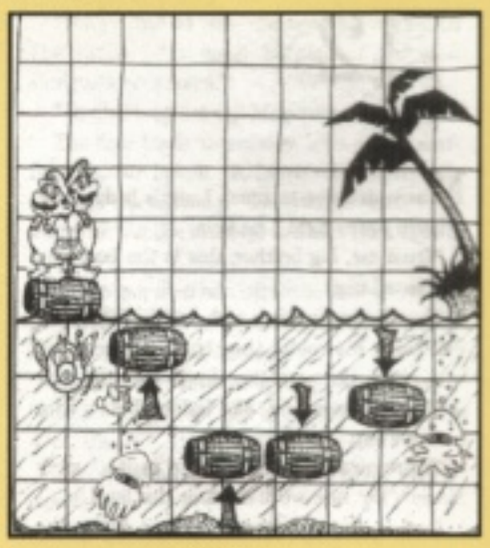
When you're finding it hard to tear yourself away from *Yoshi's Island*, you might be interested to hear that you can now get your fix of Mario gaming in a more handy portable format. Yes, the Mario Adventure Books sitting on shelves of game stores across the country are the ideal way to pass the time when you're in a SNES-free zone.

And yes, we've managed to cajole THE Games into offering us 15 sets of 5 books to give away to you lot.

If you haven't tried adventure books before, the basic premise is that you control the action. You read a chapter and are faced with some kind of dilemma – such as: should Mario enter the house at the top of the hill or should he return and look for Yoshi, and other such earth-shattering conundrums. To spice things up, there are different puzzles to solve, which can take the form of anagrams, mazes, simple number-crunching exercises with the odd bit of code-breaking thrown in to muddle your head in a Mensa-like way. If you come unstuck with the puzzles, you're likely to come a cropper quickly. And there's no point trying to cheat your way to the end – er, cos I've tried and just got even more muddled by getting stuck in some kind of surreal plot loop.

Fancy it? If you'd like to win a set of the Mario Adventure Books, have a go at the puzzle below. Send your answer on a postcard or the back of a sealed-down envelope to: **"A mind-numbing puzzler if ever I saw one", *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.** Closing date: 25th April.

The books cost £2.99 each and are available from all good gamesstores.



The barrels move up and down one space every second, except that they stay on the surface for two seconds. Work out whether or not Mario and Luigi can make it to the other side of the pond. Bung your answer down on a postcard and mail it to the address above...

Want to win some of these Mario Adventure Books? Then have a go at the sample puzzle to the left.

Why is it...?

That on TV and in films...

●... people who start talking about videogames are instantly afflicted by problem hair? Violet Berlin, Dominik Diamond, Andy Crane, Dave Perry (does he have any?) and that Canadian bloke from Electric Circus. They all have violently bad hairstyles and a complete lack of anything resembling a healthy barnet. Must be radiation or something.

●... the likes of *WarGames* can be so dull yet such a success?

●... programme makers use primitive bleepy-bloppy sound effects from the Atari VCS version of *Pac-Man* whenever there's someone supposed to be playing a game on-screen? It's happened on Beverly Hills 90210 and any number of others. Do they think that if they don't we won't actually realise that it's supposed to be a videogame?

●... whenever someone's playing a videogame they'll be frantically hammering the joystick and firebuttons and saying something like, "I'm going for my high score!" when in fact they're repeatedly dying on-screen?

●... and in particular the film Urban Commando, when this kid's playing what is clearly Sega's *After Burner* coin-op and moaning profusely about the Warload Zolgar or some such nonsense and Hulk Hogan takes over (he is, after all, a seasoned space pilot) and carries on the 'battle' thrashing the joystick from side to side and shouting things about 'plasma shields' and 'zagmor bombs' and other made-up cack?

●... the portrayal of videogames always makes them appear scary? Take Lawnmower Man. Cobblers! And then they go on to churn out a shat game based on a film based on a game. *And* the shat game wasn't in fact a game, but a kind of interactive movie! It's all getting rather confusing.

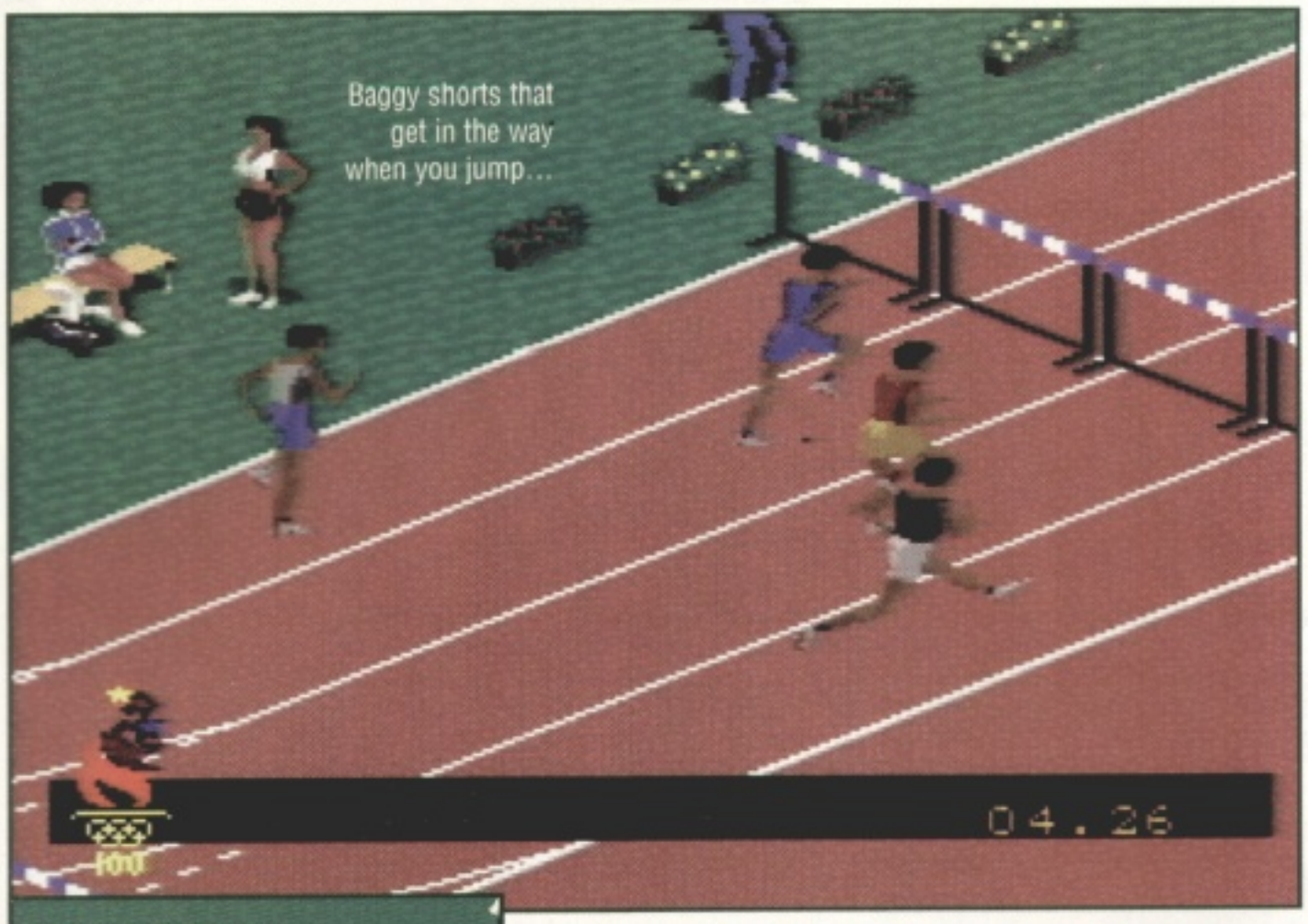
●... that 'Gran' in the McDonalds 'Meals on Wheels' advert – purveyor of Game Boy games – is such an old bag? "Has it got cheese?" "Is this the milk shake?" What do you think, you old hag!

●... games players always get sucked into their TV set and are placed in a fantasy world from which they have to escape in order to get back to reality?

●... in morning chat shows, whenever the topic of videogames comes up you always get some cretin calling up the hotline ready with a confession that he has been expelled from school, loves *Mortal Kombat* and plays on his SNES for around eight hours a day?

Thanks to Richard Melville and the boys down the pub. *(Hey Richard, do you really live in St. Thomas in Exeter? I come from Exeter and I have to say – that is one grim area. – Sean)*

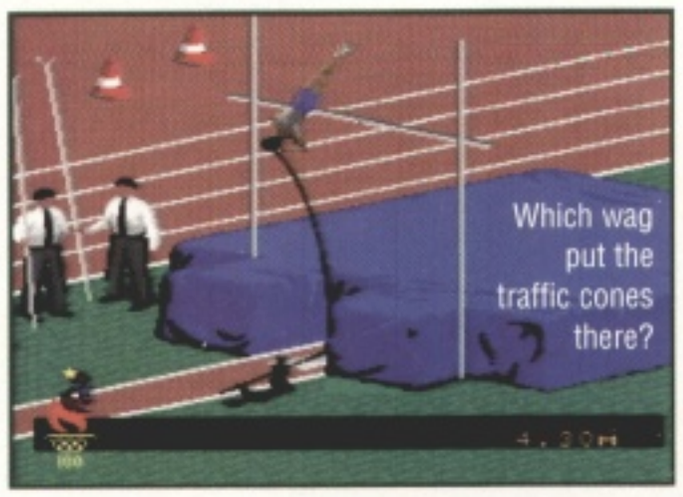
Next month, we'll be putting platformers under the microscope. Please contribute, we've got loads of goodies to give away – and try to make 'em funny.



OLYMPIC SUMMER GAMES

Due for release on the SNES in June is *Olympic Summer Games* from those SNES loyal folk at T•HQ. Basically it's a reworking of the NES classic *Track 'n' Field* featuring the following 10 track, field and shooting events: 100m sprint, 110 hurdles, high jump, pole vault, triple jump, long jump, javelin, discus, clay pigeon and archery. Obviously much frantic button tappage will be necessary and that's about all there is to say concerning this one until we get our grubby little mitts on it.

Here, have some exclusive screen-shots for now...



MOHAWK AND HEADPHONE JACK

A bit of an odd one this. Mohawk and Headphone Jack are a couple of CD seeking, wild and crazy, rock 'n' roll guys searching for the best tunes in town over 14 massive levels. First appearances would seem to suggest a cross between *Metroid* and the rotatable levels in *Super Ghouls and Ghosts* – which isn't a bad thing. It features impressive use of Mode 7, 360 degree rotation, constantly shifting gravity and the ability for the characters to morph into a unicycle, blimp, fish and bird. We'll be giving *Mohawk* the full review treatment next month, expect a release in mid June.

TITUS JOIN DREAM TEAM

The latest developers to become members of the Nintendo 64 Dream Team are Titus – those of *Prehistorik Man*, *Sink Or Swim* and the soon to be released *Power Pigs* (see page 8), erm, fame.

We can exclusively reveal that over the last few months Titus have been secretly readying a Nintendo 64 conversion of the Amiga hit *Crazy Cars* for the E3 trade show – to be held in Los Angeles in May. Their aim is to unveil a playable demo, available to showgoers, before announcing another, as yet top secret, 64-bit title.

We'll have more on what could turn out to be one of Nintendo 64's first driving games next month.

NEXT MONTH: WIN THIS!

That's right, in the next action-packed issue of *Super Play* you could be in with a chance of winning this £3,000 *Killer Instinct 2* coin-op. So, why are we mentioning it now? Because we're excited and you really shouldn't miss out on our biggest compo ever, that's why – insolent fools!

Ultimate

Future Games

In-depth look at the official PSX Formula 1 racer from the people who brought you Wipeout...

Stuffed with Next Gen tips and cheats...
PlayStation • Saturn
3DO • Jaguar • PC

Ultra 64 - Exclusive launch news!

Exclusive Review

Killer Instinct 2

http://www.futurenet.co.uk
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Issue 17

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COMPO!

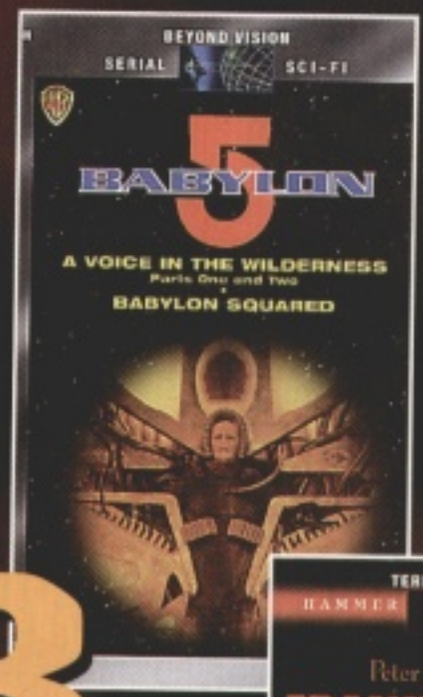
SHOCK! HORROR

To celebrate the release of these here videos from Warner Home Video, we've got together with those ghoulish but generous peeps responsible for the Beyond Vision and Terror Vision series.

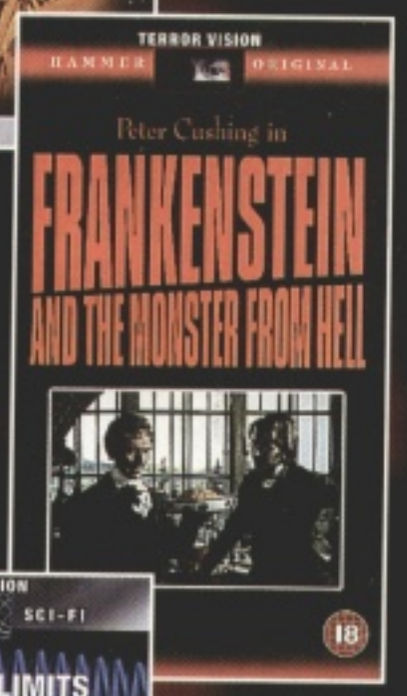
We've got two copies of each of the following to give away: Rollerball – the mid-70s futuristic and rather nasty drama which gave a whole new meaning to the term blood sport; Frankenstein Must be Destroyed and Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell – both are classic Hammer horror, Ollie's seen them and he's says they're "burrrrilliant!"; Babylon 5 vol 9 – which includes the episodes A Voice in the Wilderness and Babylon Squared; and The Outer Limits vol 6 with two episodes appearing for the first time on video in the UK starring a young and always-great-whatever-he's-in Martin Sheen. Fantastic, eh?

If you want to win one of these vids, answer this simple question: What are the names of Martin Sheen's two showbiz sons? First correct answers pulled from the gigantic *Super Play* hat will win. Send your answers to: *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Entries in by: 25th April.

All these films are otherwise available at your local video vendor now. Count on paying £7.99 for The Outer Limits series, £10.99 for the Frankenstein movies, £12.99 for Rollerball, and £14.99 for Babylon 5.



Your chance to win all these...



Spooky!

Spacey!

Creepy!

Spiky!

STREET FIGHTER: THE STORYTELLING GAME

***Street Fighter 2* has been around for a while now, but amongst the small army of games which centre around two people hitting each other it's still pretty much the original and best. Other beat-'em-ups may have flashier sprites and more combos, but *SF2* is still the only game where even people who don't play it can remember the names of all the characters.**

As a result, the adventures of Ryu, Guile, Chun-Li and the rest have been chronicled in a whole fistful of different media, including comics, films (both animated and live-action), and a complete TV series in Japan. White Wolf Game Studio have recently added to the list with *Street Fighter: The Storytelling Game*, enabling imaginative fans to step into the shoes of their favourite World Warriors, and perhaps find out what life is like on the other side of the screen.

What White Wolf call a storytelling game, we call a role-playing game – not the computer kind like *Secret of Mana*, but a paper-based RPG in the style of *Dungeons and Dragons* or *Traveller*, where players design and control detailed alter-egos while the Gamesmaster sits back and makes their characters' lives a living hell.

The game comes as a 192-page softcover book, and includes character records, colour maps, and two sheets of cardboard stand-ups depicting the Street Fighters and assorted thugs, ninjas and cops to beat up on. The players can take the part of any of the established World Warriors (who are all described in outstanding detail), or design their own street fighters in the hope of working their way up through the ranks of international knuckle-artists. A huge list of fighting skills and moves is included in the rules, subdivided into various styles of fighting, giving the characters a rounded, coherent feel and enabling the players to design an almost infinite number of combos and special attacks.

Of course, life isn't all fisticuffs: the writers of this game have taken care to emphasise that there is more to life in the Street Fighter world than finding somebody bigger than you and kicking seven bells out of them. With M. Bison and his Shadoloo organisation lurking in the background, there is plenty of opportunity for players to engage in everything from simple tournaments to James Bond-style espionage. Cammy might be a match for anyone in the fighting arena, but can she stop Bison's laser satellite from vaporising Scotland?

White Wolf have really gone to town with this product. It oozes quality – every page is printed in glossy colour, with plenty of illustrations and diagrams to explain the more complex areas of the rules. *SF: TSG* is a difficult beast to get hold of – you'll most likely chance across it in specialist gaming shops or by mail order – but if you can hunt it down it's worth ten quid of any *SF2* fan's money.

THE LITTLEST LOBO

EXCLUSIVE! FROM OUR US CORRESPONDENT

Lobo gently kicks his opponent in the face. Friendly guy.

Lobo
Ocean ● 16Mbits ● US import

Ocean aims to prove that 16bit can still stomp with the best of 'em. *Lobo*'s got all the gore and action that any fighting-game could ask for... Hey – it features the Main Man, don't it? *{Excuse the lingo, but our correspondent is a genuine Yankee doodle dandy. – Ed}* The upshot of all this is that there's a generous portion of dark humour tossed into the mix.

But don't expect an *SF2*-like clone – this one's been lobo-tomized so that it's a brutal free-for-all. One or two players (or eight in Tournament mode) can take on the personas of Vril Dox, Loo, Nitro, Kringle, Shaola and even clones of the same – all competing to be the biggest and baddest bastich in the galaxy. That means battling each other in bizarre joints like sewers, or hanging out on a gallows. (There's always the strange fortress of the demented Kringle, among other locations.) And it all leads to the big end fight where you take on the Lobo clone (bad is bad, but one Lobo pounding another Lobo is worse).

There's Lobo on the left hanging around on the gallows. Er... literally.

Tasty rendered backdrops.

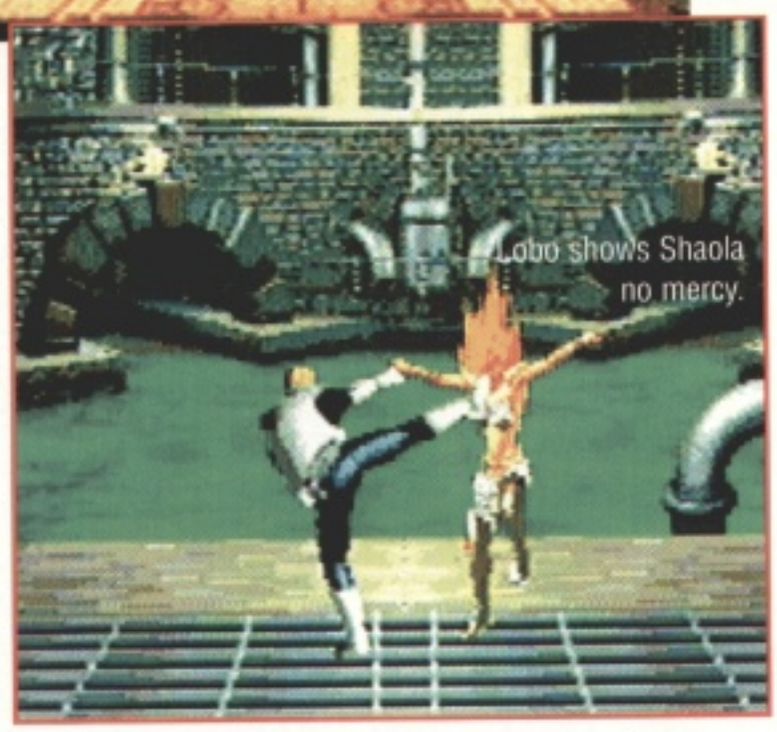
We wouldn't like to meet the man who played Lobo's part.

The real fun is in the fightin' and you get some cool moves to make the other guy lose his lunch. Lobo can do stuff like stomp on his foe, or shoot at him or even ram a grenade down the guy's throat (try that Ryu!). Dox's got a whole slew of killer punches, and Loo brings his big machine gun to the party (useful for shooting, or simply smacking you around the head).

Nitro's double punch plasma blast is a good one for starters, and, after his Shake and Bake move, he just might blow a hole through ya. For a girl, Shaola isn't too mannered, especially if you get sliced 'n' diced with her sword or end up on the receiving end of her Fury Claws or Tornado Kick. Kringle's the big guy with the beard and he ain't no jolly Saint Nick – not with those knives he carries for carving. With a blizzard for a breath and a love of clutching you to his breast and then stabbing you a few dozen times – one soon learns how swiss cheese feels. And of course they all have finishing moves.

How does it all look? Pretty damn good cos the graphics are beefed up using high-end Silicon Graphics work stations that render some really cool images – and each character's 27 different moves were recorded using live actors performing in front of high-speed motion capture cameras. Go for the Solo bouts, or Practice your moves before taking on another player or the Tourney – it's all here.

Expect to see a full review right here in *Super Play* once we get our hands on a finished version of the game.



Lobo shows Shaola no mercy.

THE MAIN MAN

Friendly lo... We did... about L... DC ...mics char... So... a little visit to the official Lobo internet site and this is what we learnt: "The Main Man FRAGS OK! Nuff said or do you want ... fraggin' arms ripped off ... you guys! Anyway, that's about ... you need to ...ow, I guess...

THE CHARTS

With the departure of Digitiser's Weekly SNES charts service, *Super Play* remains one of the few places for you to check on your favourite games' progress. Yet another reason to sort out that subscription you've been promising yourself.

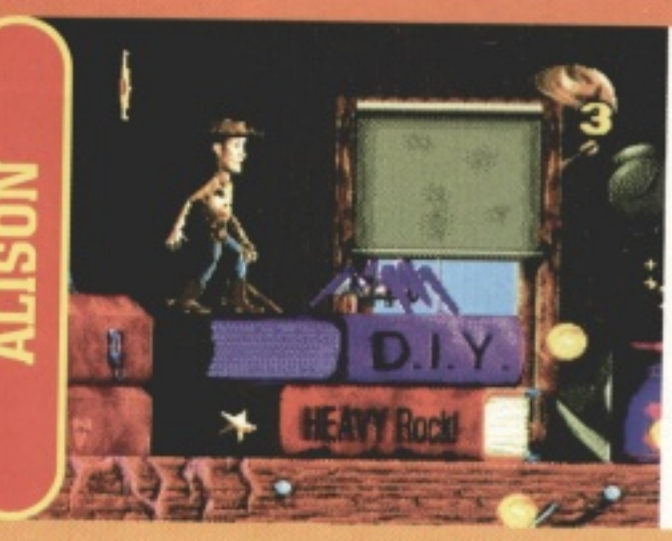
OFFICIAL GALLUP UK SUPER NINTENDO CHART

1	DIDDY'S KONG QUEST	Nintendo	SP40 82%
2	KILLER INSTINCT	Nintendo	SP36 85%
3	YOSHI'S ISLAND	Nintendo	SP36 94%
4	FIFA SOCCER '96	Electronic Arts	SP37 84%
5	SUPER METROID	Nintendo	SP25 91%
6	SUPERSTAR SOCCER DELUXE	Konaki	SP38 94%
7	SECRET OF EVERMORE	Nintendo	SP39 81%
8	ILLUSION OF TIME	Nintendo	SP26 88%
9	DOOM	Ocean	SP32 91%
10	SUPER MARIO KART	Nintendo	SP1 93%

SUPER PLAY'S HOT LIST

Yes, we're addicted to video games, it all started early in the month – here's our story...

ALISON



Some editor she turned out to be! Alison doesn't even look you in the eye while dishing out all the dull tasks, she's far to busy plugging away at *Toy Story* – ALL MONTH! That's it, we're hiding that bloody cart as soon as she leaves the SNES.

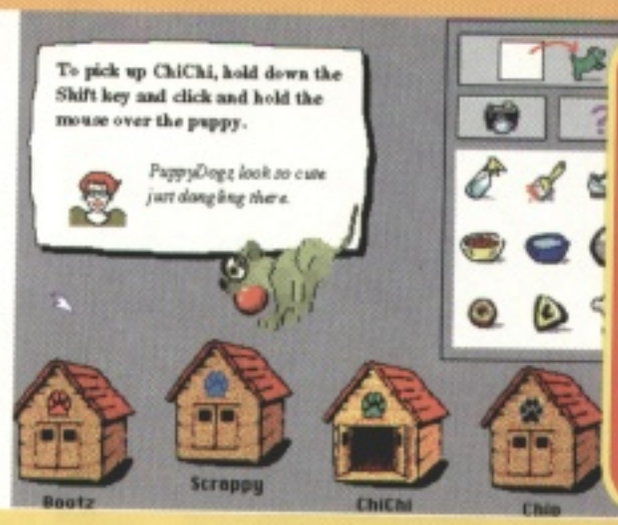
OLLIE

"Oh, I stayed really late last night," claims Ollie in an attempt to score brownie points with the team when an all but finished *Final Fight Tough* is visibly on pause across the room. Very immature behaviour, he will be punished...

"Must play more *De Pon*. Must play more *De Pon*!" That's been new boy Sean's spooky chant around the office all month. The jury's still out on him at the moment – is he a spong? We'll let you know as soon as we've decided...

SEAN

For the first time in his *Super Play* career, our Will has spent most of the month fiddling about with a Mac game. Well, sort of, *Dogz* isn't so much a game as it is a pet. He forgot to feed it last week and broke down in tears at his desk.


To pick up ChiChi, hold down the Shift key and click and hold the mouse over the puppy.
PuppyDogz look so cute just dangling there.
Bootz
Scrappy
ChiChi
Chip

WIL

FIFA

FIFA 96 SOCCER

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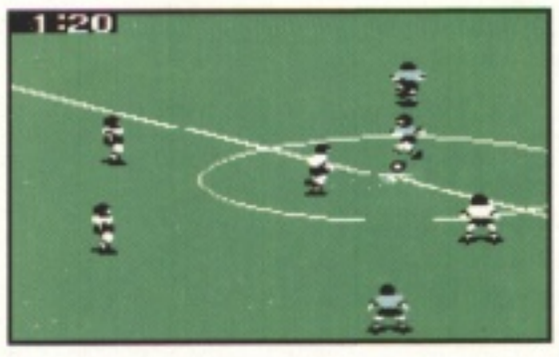

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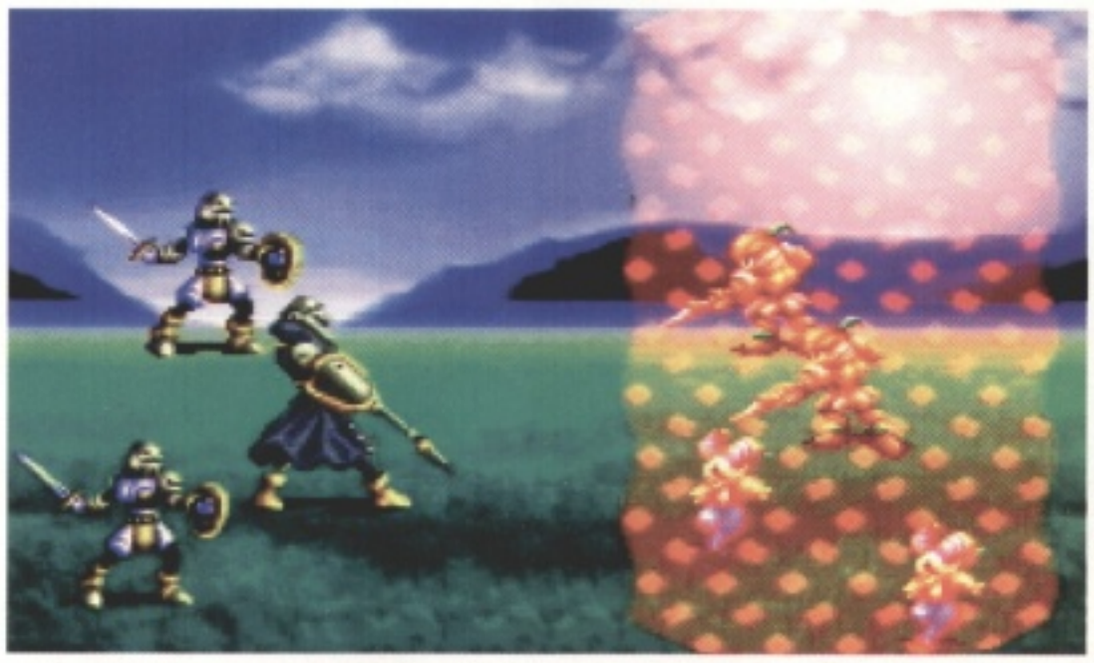
FANTA

Nintendo may have lost Final Fantasy VII, but there's still more than enough Square to go round...



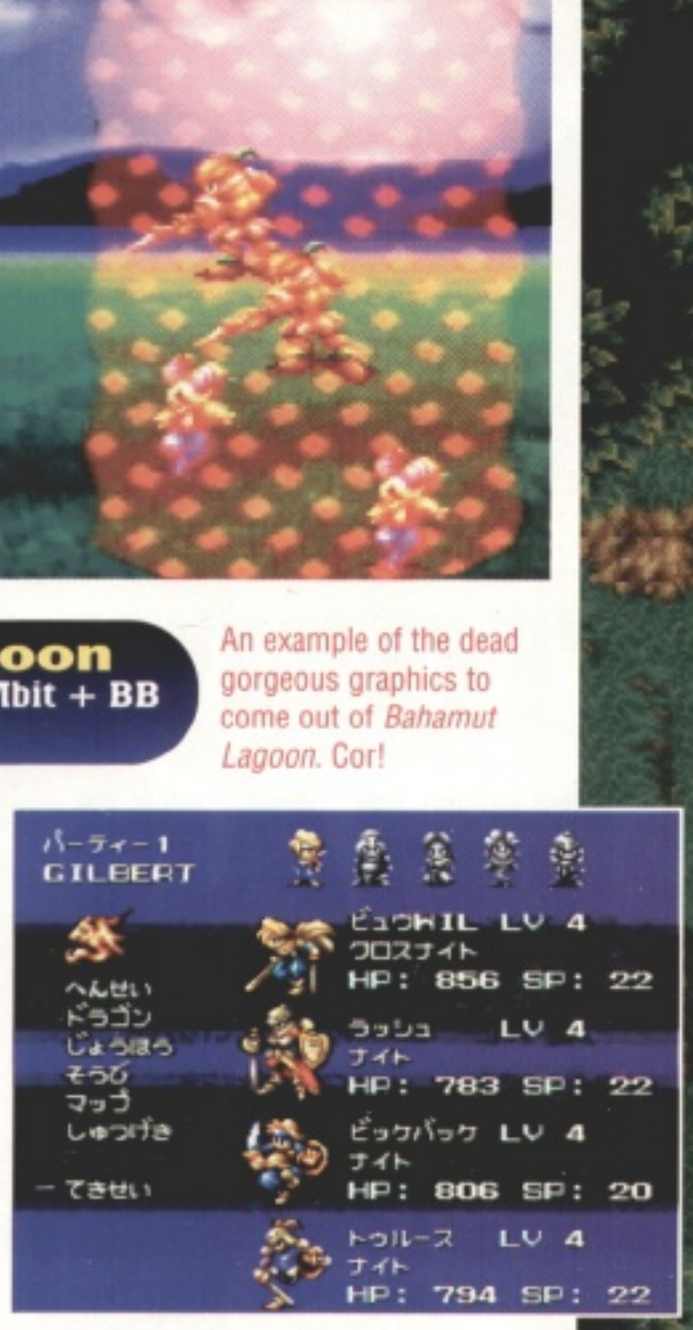
Bahamut Lagoon
Square Soft (Japan) • 24Mbit + BB
Out now (Japan)

An example of the dead gorgeous graphics to come out of *Bahamut Lagoon*. Cor!

With a young programming team under the supervision of *Final Fantasy* producer Hinorobu Sakaguchi, *Bahamut Lagoon* continues Square's foray into the world of simulation wargames that started last year with the stylish *Front Mission*.

While the RPG elements are negligible and only really serve as intermissions that tie the thirty-odd skirmishes together, the game's real gimmick is that you can feed a dragon, who fights alongside your party, with anything that comes to hand. Armour, weapons, spells and potions can all be forced upon the hapless beast to change his characteristics and sometimes even his appearance. Although raising your dragon is supposedly a large part of the game, in reality, it's a rather hit and miss affair. Whilst as a general rule, if you feed them fire magic, their fire attack will increase, you can't actually see how much the dragon will be affected until you feed him the item.

What's initially appealing about *Lagoon* is the sumptuous graphics. The lead graphic designer, Hitoshi Sasaki, obviously had a vision, and, as he is also credited as the head game designer, it would appear that *Lagoon* is really his baby. Every screen seems to be overlaid with a mist and diffused light effect that creates a very convincing mystical look. Character designs are yet another variation on the *Final Fantasy* SD look, but with more



Stats, stats. We crave stats.

A typical *Bahamut Lagoon* battlefield. Each party consists of four characters and a dragon.

Only feed your dragon the finest – spells, weapons and armour. That tinned stuff just won't do.

Super Play's top dragon Gilbert goes for the old roast soldier on Salisbury plain tactic.

The cockpit of your flying island, would you believe? Well you should, cos it is!

SY QUEST

Things can get very cluttered during battle.

fluid animation during the battle sequences.

The downer is that, like *Front Mission*, *Bahamut Lagoon* just isn't hard enough. Even without a grasp of Japanese, it's possible to make steady progress through the battles using just the default parties and settings. Make sure you've got enough healing potions, and regularly upgrade weapons and armour and even bosses fall fairly easily. After the sixth round, bonus levels are also available where you can boost your supplies and also uncover treasure which makes life even easier.

Compared to the likes of *Tactics Ogre* (which we defy anyone without a thorough grasp of the Japanese language to get more than a few hours into) *Bahamut Lagoon* seems fairly lightweight, and Square fanatics shouldn't feel too cheated if it never appears on Western shelves.

Take out emplacements early as they can attack from a fair distance.

Yes, yes, we all know Square can give us lovely graphics but where's the real innovation?

This innocent house holds a terrible secret. Something no-one will ever discover – *Final Fantasy VIII* is on the Virtual Boy!

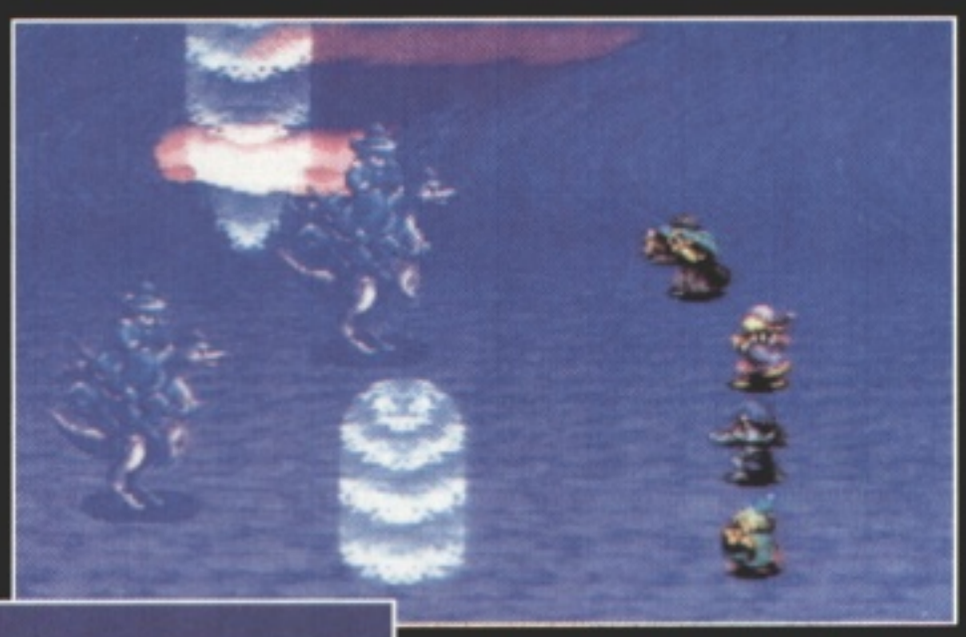
With only ten minutes until the end of the human race our heroes decide that they just can't be bothered any more.

...and there's more

Not content with providing *Super Play* with two new games in this issue, Square Soft (Japan) are assaulting the Japanese market not only on the ground, but via satellite as well.

Their next official cartridge release after *Treasure Hunter G* is *Treasure of Rudola – The World of Downfall* and *Revival*, an RPG which, instead of providing different story endings depending on what characters you choose, gives you three totally different scenarios.

The human race has only sixteen days to live before the, not so benevolent god, Rudola fufills his habit of making a new dominant race of beings every four thousand years. Races like the intelligent Danan's, an aquatic race and even a society of giants have all risen and fallen by Rudola's hand over the years.



And you wanted to take the flippin' tunnel!

Each scenario has its own hero, Sirent, Cion or Dune and you can choose to complete the tasks in any order. You also get to decide how many days out of the sixteen you spend with each party. As certain events happen on specific days, there's a fair amount of playing involved if you're to uncover all of *Rudola*'s 32Mbit of secrets.

Treasure of Rudola also allows you to mix up your own magic (or Kodama as the game calls it). The actual spell you cast is determined by whatever name you call it. You can use up to six words to label your magic, and, although the game supposedly generates a spell depending on what you type in, we suspect it's just a random choice from a set list, as you only get to discover what the magic does by casting it. Whether you type using romanji (Western characters) or Japanese isn't yet known.

With a battle system that looks very much like *Final Fantasy* and graphics not dissimilar to *Bahamut Lagoon*, *Treasure of Rudola* is set for a Japanese release on 5th April.

It's a well known fact that if everyone in China shouted "we want more Square games in the West" at once, they might take a bit of notice.

And to think this is what *Final Fantasy VII* on the SNES could have looked like,.

Meanwhile, in what might seem like a bid to get rid of all their remaining Super Famicom projects in one fell swoop, Square have no less than four games running on Nintendo's Satellaview channel at the moment. *Dynamite Racer*, *Love Balance*, *Trigger Conflicts* and *Radical Dreamers* are all RPGs, but with some interesting twists. *Trigger Conflicts* has a vertical shooter at its heart, and, by finding treasures and money, you can upgrade your ship for the next stage. *Radical Dreamers: Unstolen Jeweller* is more of a storybook affair somewhat like Chun Soft's Sound novel series with a time limit on battles and multiple endings.

Whether these are full Satellaview-only mini games or demos prior to a proper release we've yet to discover, but they certainly sound more interesting than Square's current cartridge line-up.

LIVE

FROM HELL CITY

By Nihon Sekai-yusu

HYPER FIERCE SLOT ACTION

Just as Japan is home to the best consoles games, it's also the breeding ground for the best new coin-ops. With this in mind, we just *had* to pop along to see the latest examples in action. (Erm, we must apologise in advance for the appearance of the word 'Sega' in the following report; such is the world of arcade gaming...)

This year, Japan's AOU (Amusement Operators Union) show was held in February at the same venue used for Shoshinkai in November last year – Makuhari Messe in Tokyo. It's one of the biggest showS of its kind in Japan – the only other event of similar standing being the Jamma exhibition – and it serves as the launchpad for all major coin-op designers' big games.

After losing out to Namco last year, it was the turn of Sega to dominate this time around, something they achieved by simply trundling out a cabinet with the words 'Virtua' and 'Fighter' and the number '3' emblazoned across it. It's impossible to overstate just how mad Japanese gamers are about Sega's premier polygon fighting series, and the crowds surrounding the latest instalment bore witness to its popularity – even sardines would have felt a mite uncomfortable in the clamour to get even a peek at the game, let alone a chance to have a go on it.

The first game to use Sega's Model 3 board (*Virtua Racing* was the first game to use Model 1; *Virtua Fighter 2* the first to use Model 2, for the record), *VF3* is the best-looking coin-op ever made, with real-time visuals genuinely on a par with Silicon Graphics workstations. The fighters, of which there'll be 12 in the finished game (ten from *VF2* and two new female characters), now look frighteningly real, with accurate facial details such as independent eye and mouth movements.

Only one stage was available to actually play at the event, but even on this basis the clear signs are that Sega have another world-beater on their hands. The arrival of *VF3* will underline the importance of polygon beat-'em-ups at a time when the 2D varieties – in the form of *Killer Instinct 2* and *Street Fighter Zero 2* (see boxout) – are resurging in popularity. The stakes have just been raised, and the pressure is definitely on Rare and Nintendo to deliver Nintendo 64 *Killer Instinct* in a full-on polygonal form...

Sonic Fighters can be linked up with other cabinets to create multi-player match-ups. Hence the '3'.

Yes, *Virtua Fighter 3* really was popular...

Elsewhere on the Sega stand, *Sonic Fighters* drew more than a snifter of interest from show attendees, all of whom seemed to appreciate the hedgehog's first proper 3D outing in the form of 'Virtua Fighter But With Small Animals'. It's a smooth enough effort with some clever morphing attacks, but... well... it's bloody Sonic, isn't it? And he can bugger off.

Fortunately, *Virtua Kidz* features nothing blue and spiky. Instead it's merely *Virtua Fighter 2*, with all the same characters, except each has a head the size of which you'd be forgiven to expect it to be wrapped up in a bandana. Definitely something of a novelty game, this one.

An appraisal which might also be levelled at *Decathlete*, Sega's attempt to drag *Track 'n' Field* into the '90s, with hi-res graphics and polygonal athletes. The core gameplay hasn't been similarly updated, though, and bashing buttons like the wind is hardly the most sophisticated development in the history of gaming.

Despite having similarly straightforward gameplay – it's a point-and-shoot lightgun game à la *Virtua Cop*, for heaven's sake – *Gun Blade NY* proved much more of an attention-grabber. Rather than the on-foot setting of *Virtua Cop*, *Gunblade* places you (and a partner, should you be in the company of chummage) in a helicopter flying over such environments as Times Square, blasting seven bails out of any baddy fool enough to cross you. Glossing it up are reet tasty Model 2 graphics, selectable camera views and enemies endowed with artificial intelligence. Nice.

Tokyo War: Cybersled with tanks. And everything.

Namco attempted to attract the attention of bods overflowing from Sega's area by providing games which, while not necessarily up to the task of beating the likes of *Virtua Fighter 3* with graphical floturish, were certainly more original and diverse in range.

Continuing in their successful *Tekken* vein was *Soul Edge*, perhaps the least original member of the line-up. Nifty spot effects, sound playability and a cast of endearing fighters lend the game the credibility it desperately needs in the light of *Tekken*'s performance, although it's unlikely to make as large a splash as Namco's former hit. *Tokyo War*, however, might well do. It's a System 22 game (the same format used by *Ridge Racer*) which loosely follows the format carved out by the ageing *Cyber Sled*, itself a Namco title. Presented as a multi-player coin-op, each participant (up to four) controls a tank as part of a White or Green team in a co-operative or competitive fashion. The playing areas are based on real parts of Tokyo and the aims are simple: destroy, destroy, then destroy some more. Its graphics are, understandably, a significant leap on from *Cyber Sled*, with rich backdrops and ballsy explosions forming the creamy topping of a cake that fans of multi-player gaming will find delish.

Fans of snowboarding, however, will have to look to *Alpine Surfer*, a slightly remodelled version of *Alpine Racer*, for their kicks. The skis of *Surfer* have, logically, been replaced by a board which is mounted to the cabinet at one end and swivels as you slam down the powdery slopes represented on screen with some seriously smooth polygonage.

Finally on the Namco stand there was *Victory Lap Super*

Gun Blade NY: Like *Virtua Cop* but with better graphics, a helicopter and some top explosionage.

PEDAL PUMPING POWER

The most unusual coin-op to be unveiled at the show was undoubtedly Namco's *Propcycle*, a bizarre flying affair which marries gaming with an exhaustive physical work-out. Sitting astride the bike-type arrangement, to get your on-screen character up, up and away you simply have to pedal like a mad thing, while the cabinet also features fans mounted just in front of where you sit, which blast out air to complete that Elliot-out-of-E.T. experience.

Namco are hoping that the game's individualistic approach will make it more attractive to those who'd not normally play videogames – especially women. After giving it the once over we have to say that we'd prefer to have our power on tap rather than having to supply it ourselves...

Fancy giving yourself a workout on this monster? Nah, course you don't. You wanna be down the pub.

Model 22 (an updated version of, yes, *Victory Lap*, with more race options and spectacularly improved graphics) and *Dunk Mania* (a System 11 basketball game). Neither could be termed revolutionary and truly only serve to illustrate that as well as coming up with games as innovative as the likes of the *Alpine* series, they'll fall back on old faithful themes.

Taito have come a long way since releasing *Space Invaders* back in 1978 (when, if rumours are to believed, they caused a yen shortage in Japan, such was the popularity of their shooter), and their latest efforts are as 3D as the best of them. *Psychic Force*, for example, is a fighting game set inside a cube, with characters able to cast long-range psychic special attacks in the style of *Dragon Ball Z*.

The shoot-'em-up *Ray Storm* is equally alluring, and proved to be one of AOU's surprise hit games. A spin-off from the *Ray Force* series, it uses the same vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up principle but, in keeping with current trends, pushes it out in polygon form. Shooters have become neglected in the last few years as beat-'em-ups and driving games have gained in popularity, and it's good to see examples such as this marking their welcome return.

Namco's *Victory Lap*. Everyone loves a car racing game.

Taito further plundered their back catalogue with *Super Football Champ*, a – wait for it – polygonised update of their long-running soccer series. As well as a fairly typical range of player moves and actions there's a level of detail not normally seen in footy games, including the ability to play matches at morning, late afternoon or night time. Groovy.

Sadly, their last offering was something of a low point: *Landing Gear*, a flight simulation game, proved about as engaging as a conversation with a piece of cheese. When will softcos learn that there's nothing even remotely exciting about flying a jumbo jet? *Fighter* jets, maybe...

Capcom and Konami, two other coin-op companies who've been around the block a few times, each had a relatively small number of games to demonstrate. Apart from a new *Street Fighter* game (see boxout), Capcom's only other notable title was *Star Gladiators*, a *Tekken*-esque fighting game which showed little of the spark evident in the company's 2D efforts of late (in the form of *Marvel Super Heroes*, for example). Konami followed the fashion dictated by Namco with *Alpine Racer* by debuting *Jet Surfer*, a most enjoyable dedicated cabinet game where you splurt around canals and open stretches of sea. The trend for this type of presentation shows no signs of letting up, making successful coin-op conversions in the home less and less likely. Konami are still supporting the traditional cabinet format, though, and *Pazuru Dama* (a *Puyo Puyo*-type puzzler), *Slam Dunk 2* (a basketball game) and their new

Capcom's *Star Gladiators* was one of the AOU show's disappointments.

STREET FIGHTING TEARS

Apart from *Virtua Fighter 3*, the other big game expected to be unwrapped at AOU was *Street Fighter III*. There were a lot of unhappy faces when it failed to materialise, and it was left to *Street Fighter Zero 2* to attract attendees to Capcom's stand. Ostensibly, the main tweaks are a range of new backdrops (which are much richer and more impressive than those of the former game), updated gameplay (notably combos, ground rolls and counters) and five known new characters: Dhalsim (out of *SFII*), Zangief (ditto), Rolento (out of *Final Fight*), Sakura (a schoolgirl) and Gen (an old gimmer).

It'll be *Street Fighter Alpha 2* here. Of course.

The fat beardy Russian flabs back onto the scene.

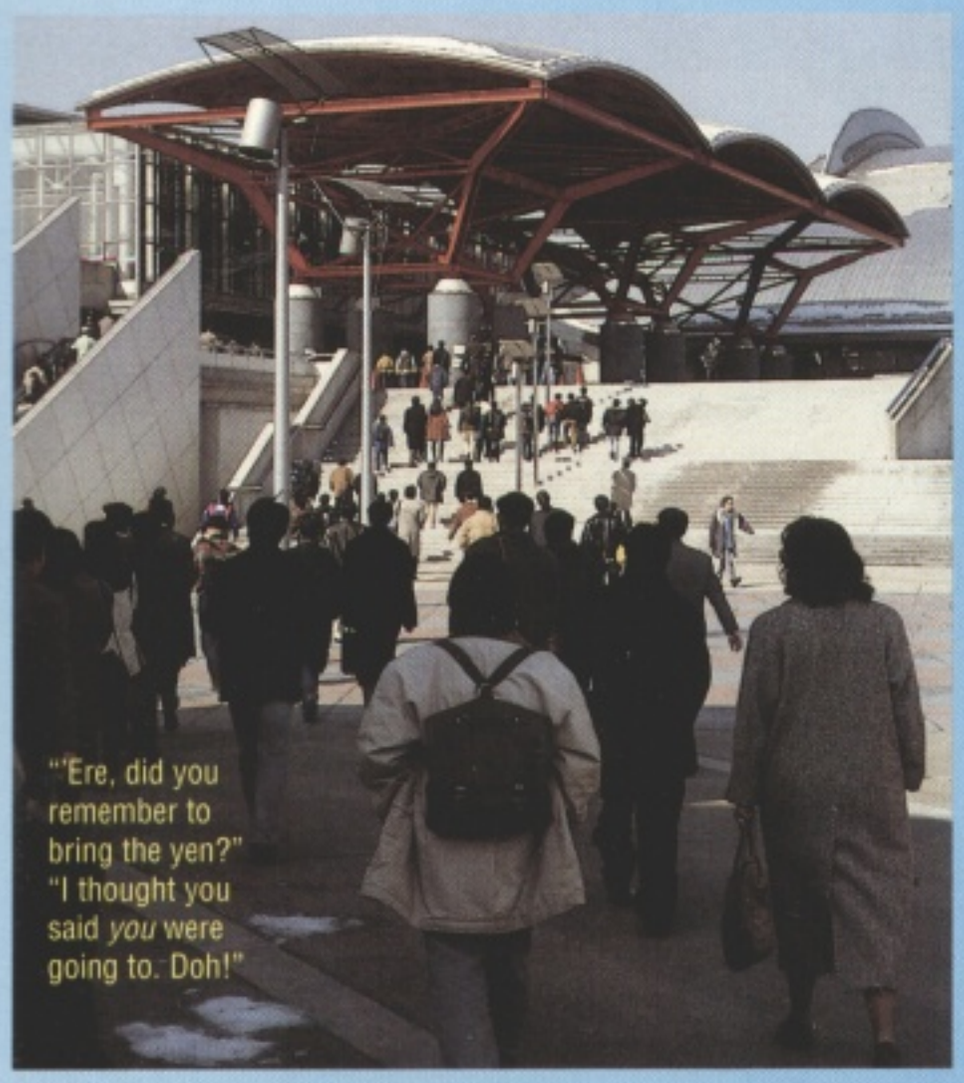
The game's beginning to filter over to the West and you should see it appearing in big numbers here in the summer.

Rumours persist concerning *Street Fighter III*. The latest to have reached the *Super Play* gossip desk suggest that the game *will* use some form of custom Nintendo 64 hardware, and that it'll explore the concept of combos like no other beat-'em-up before it.

Old gimmer Gen deals Vega (M.Bison) a bit of hurtage.

Capcom have still to confirm a release date for the coin-op, but a summer debut looks likely. After three-and-a-half years in development, it should be one worth waiting for...

Super GT 24 Hr looks every bit as swish as *Ridge Racer*.



instalment of *Parodius*, and there's a strong chance that they'll all make it consolewards in time.

One company that can be relied upon to scrape *all* of their games out of the arcades and slap them onto home format, purely because of the nature of their technology, is SNK. Their showing at AOU was significant, with *Real Bout* proving a real crowd pleaser. An update of the *Art Of Fighting* series, it's the first Neo-Geo beat-'em-up to use motion-captured sprites and the results make the extra effort appear worthwhile. Other games on this stand were *Ninja Masters* (more beat-'em-up action) and *Over Top* (a fun little driving game) from SNK licensee ADK, and *Shin o Ken* (yep, more fighting) and *Foot Salu* (a footy title) from *World Heroes* creators Saurus.

Jaleco's topsy-turvy fortunes are set for an upturn thanks to Model 2 technology.

Bumbling around the periphery were the smaller coin-op manufacturers including Data East (showing *Skull Fang*), Human (with *Grand Striker 2*), SunSoft (with beat-'em-up *Waku Waku 7*), Tecmo (demonstrating *Dead Or Alive*, a decent polygon beat-'em-up) and Jaleco (whose Super GT 24 Hr rivals *Ridge Racer* in quality). These last two titles have been born from the Model 2 technology used in the likes of *Daytona USA* following Sega's offer to allow third parties the use of their hardware – for a bit of cash, of course. Whether this unusual turn of events starts a trend in the coin-op industry remains to be seen...

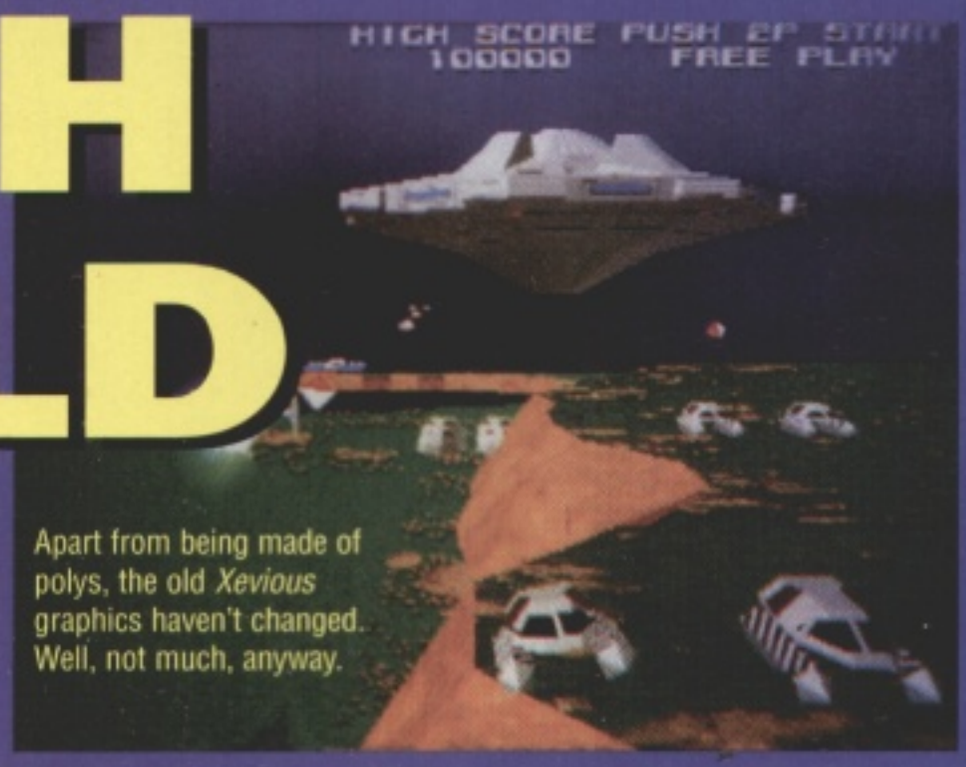
IN WITH THE OLD

The chief champion of that select breed known as 'retrogamers' has to be Namco. Their Classic Collection Vol. 2 coin-op, demonstrated at AOU, slaps together the three oldies *Pac-Man*, *Dig Dug* and *Rally-X* into one package and includes updated versions of each to boot.

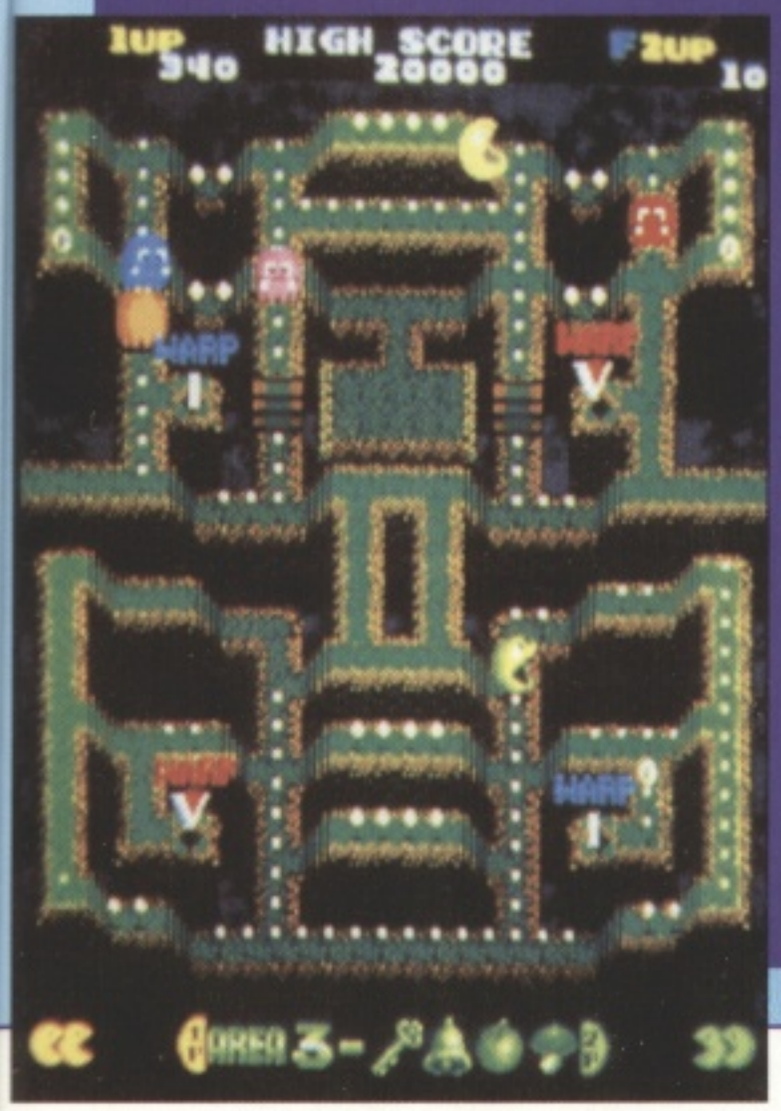
The chief alterations have, understandably, been made to graphical and aural content. The original versions of each title were spartan in both respects and now enjoy beefed-up backdrops and full, re-arranged music tracks – while the core gameplay remains largely untouched. Which will be good news to those convinced that simplistic 15-year-old gameplay remains far superior to the stuff being pumped out today...

Another new Namco update is *Xevious 3*, which takes the original game's graphical components and simply solidifies them with polygons to make it look more akin to the likes of their other coin-op hit, *Galaxian 3*. Seeing the old *Xevious* environments reinterpreted in three dimensions is fascinating, while the tweaked gameplay ensures that this isn't just a case of mouth and no trousers.

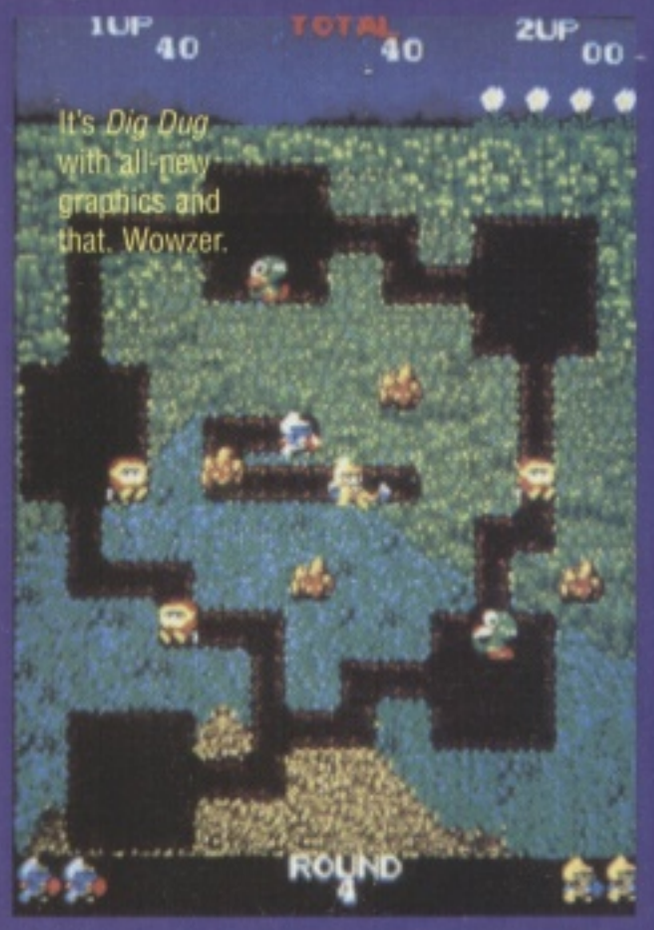
Like *Classic Collection Vol.2*, it's far from guaranteed a release in the West, but we've got our firebutton-ready fingers crossed.



Apart from being made of polys, the old *Xevious* graphics haven't changed. Well, not much, anyway.



Classic Vol.2's *Pac-Man* update sees the yellow feller getting sort of 3D-ised. Sort of.



It's *Dig Dug* with all-new graphics and that. Wowzer.

100% Edgeculture

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Take part and win a top prize!

READER SURVEY

We're in the process of making your favourite magazine even better... But before we go ahead and exceed all of your expectations we thought we'd better consult you first. All this will take is a couple of minutes of your time, and you're guaranteed a say in the future of *Super Play* magazine. In addition you'll be entered into our draw for some top prizeage... So, get a pen handy, fill in the relevant bits here, rip this page out and send it to **Reader Survey, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.** Closing date: Thursday, 25th April.

THE QUESTIONS

What are your reasons for choosing *Super Play* magazine to read?

.....

.....

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How often do you read *Super Play*?

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What do you like best about *Super Play*?

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Are there any parts of *Super Play* which you don't like? Give details...

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If there was anything you could change about *Super Play* what would it be?

.....

.....

.....

Which has been your favourite issue of *Super Play* and why?

.....

.....

.....

Which bit of *Super Play* do you usually turn to first?

.....

.....

Do you intend to buy a Nintendo 64?

Yes ❑ UK machine ❑ Import machine
No ❑

Which of the current crop of the Nintendo 64 games are you looking forward to most?

.....

How many games have you bought for your SNES over the last 12 months?

.....

Which is your favourite type of game?

RPG	❑
Beat-'em-up	❑
Shoot-'em-up	❑
Platform	❑
Football sim	❑
Sport sim	❑
Puzzle game	❑
Other (please specify)	❑

What has been your favourite game over the last year?

.....

Which of *Super Play*'s free gifts has appealed to you the most?

.....

If the Virtual Boy were to get an official UK release would you consider buying one?
❑ Yes ❑ No

Do you read any other video games magazines? If yes, please name them and mark them out of 10.

..... /10
..... /10
..... /10
..... /10
..... /10

Do you regularly read any magazines other than video game related ones? Please name them here... And, oh go on then, give them a mark out of 10.

..... /10
..... /10
..... /10

Do you use the Internet?
❑ Yes ❑ No
If yes, where?
❑ School ❑ Home ❑ College/university

Your age .....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

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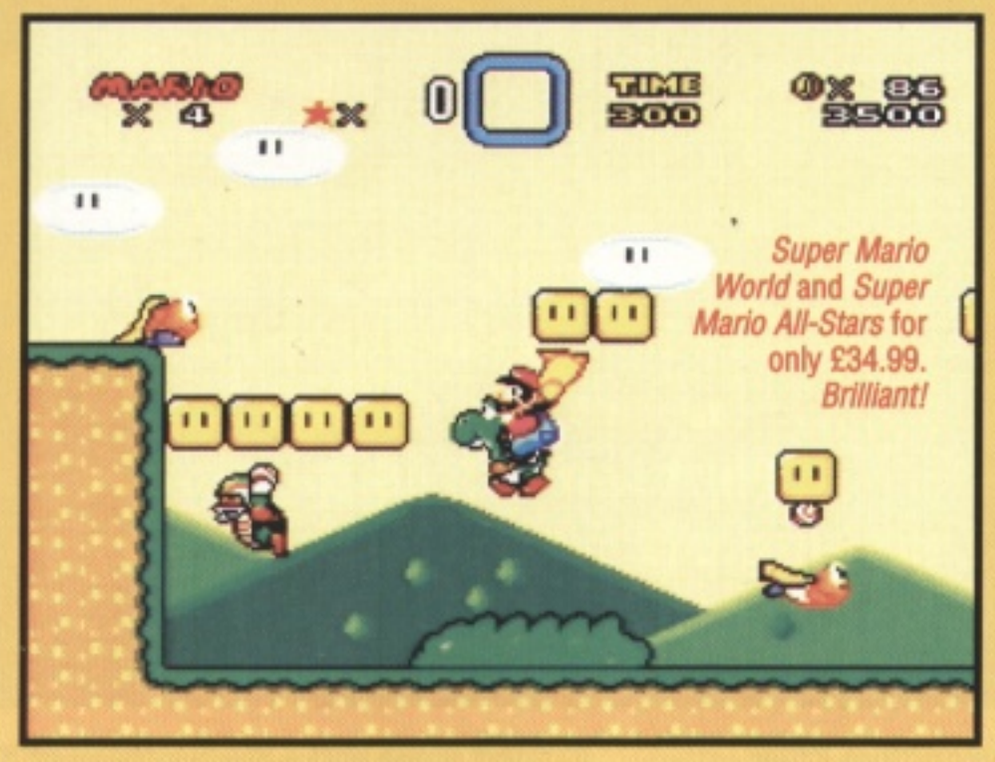
Postcode.....

If there's anything else you'd like to add, here's your chance...

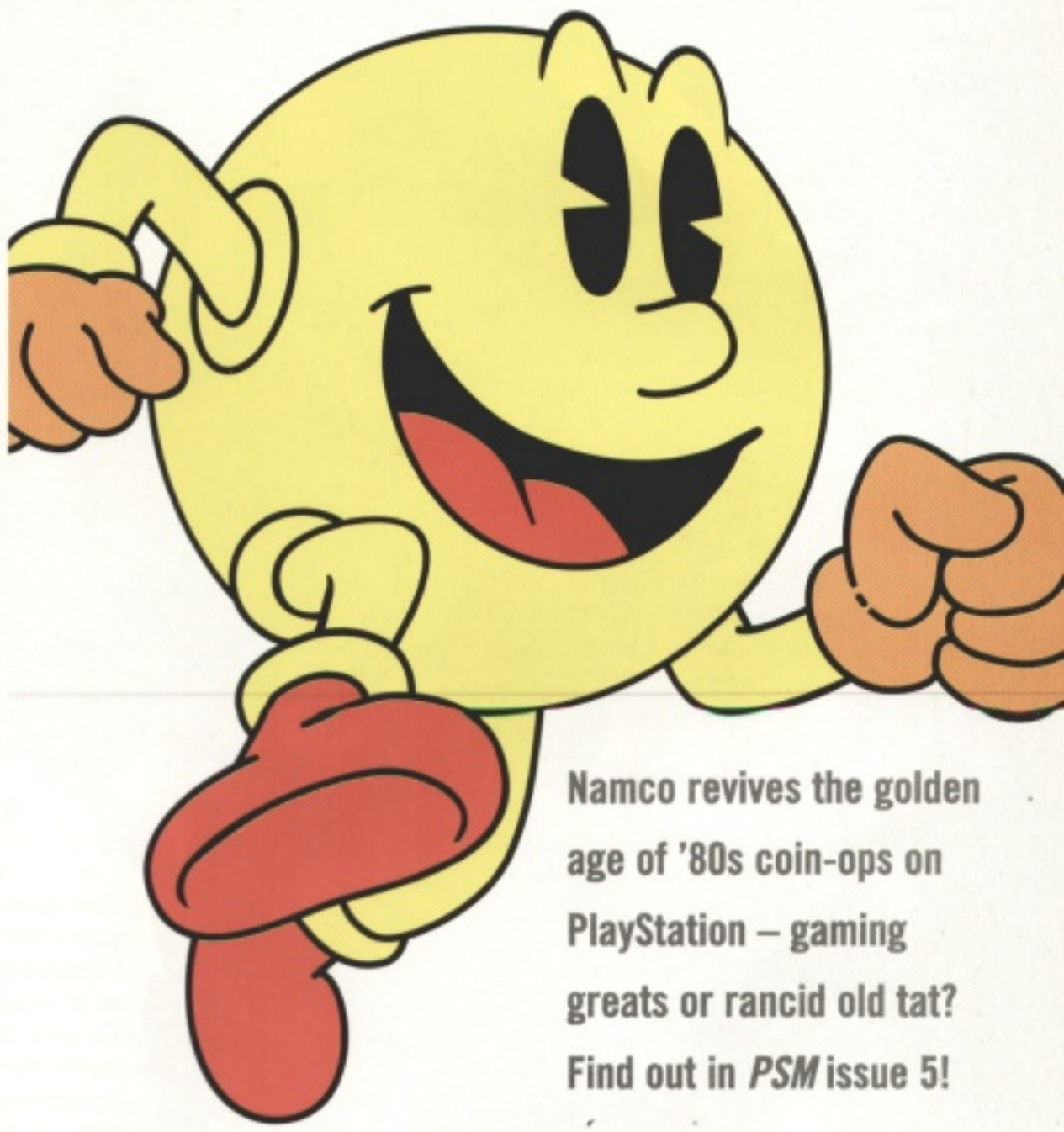
WIN LOADS OF GAMES!

If your reader survey is the first one which we pull out of Sean's Big Baseball Cap, you'll win this rather stunning bundle of games: *Illusion of Time*, *Killer Instinct*, *Super Punch Out!*, *Stunt Race FX*, *Super Metroid*, *Unirally*, *Super Mario All-Stars* and *Super Mario World* (two in one pack). Pretty top games one and all and a pretty bonzer incentive for you to fill The *Super Play* Reader Survey, we think.

By way of a reminder, these games are part of a bargain classics range re-released by THE Games. All are available at knock-down prices ranging from a mere £14.99 to £34.99 for the Mario double-pack. The selection is available from all major video games retailers. Pep up your games selection with some of these...



Pac is back!



Namco revives the golden age of '80s coin-ops on PlayStation – gaming greats or rancid old tat? Find out in *PSM* issue 5!

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KILLER INSTINCT 2

INSERT COIN

Welcome to our new, regular coin-op update. With the Nintendo 64 only weeks away, the arcade scene is becoming more and more important to the world of Nintendo. This month we're kicking off with a review of Rare's latest creation...

The original *Killer Instinct* caused a storm in the arcades back in December '94. As an example of what the (then) Ultra 64 was capable of, it, along with *Cruis'n USA*, had us salivating all over the office carpet. In fact, to this day, it's still doing better business than the fairly recent *MK3* in many US arcades.

Things have moved on considerably since then. For starters, 'real' 3D beat-'em-ups are now littered around the Next Gen gaming scene and a SNES version of *KI* illustrated that it wasn't as complicated a game as we'd all first imagined.

Fifteen months later and Rare have just completed the sequel. It was always going to have to be radically improved and, as we were the first Nintendo mag to have an afternoon-long play on the finished version, who better to give you the lowdown?

The most noticeable difference between this and its predecessor is the inclusion of three new characters and a hearty farewell to Riptor, Cinder and Chief Thunder. The new characters, Kim Wu (a tasty Samurai who wields nunchakas), Tusk (a sluggish barbarian type with a

THE FALL GUYS

As with most 3D, or kind of 3D beat-'em-ups these days, it doesn't take much of an excuse for characters to fall to their doom.

Fulgor Mk 2 suffers at the hands of Sabrewulf who's partial to bunging folk down his well.

He's left it a little late for a combo breaker.

UK Release

Game: Killer Instinct 2
Publisher: Midway/Nintendo
Developer: Rare
Price: Win one next month
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 2
Speed: 3

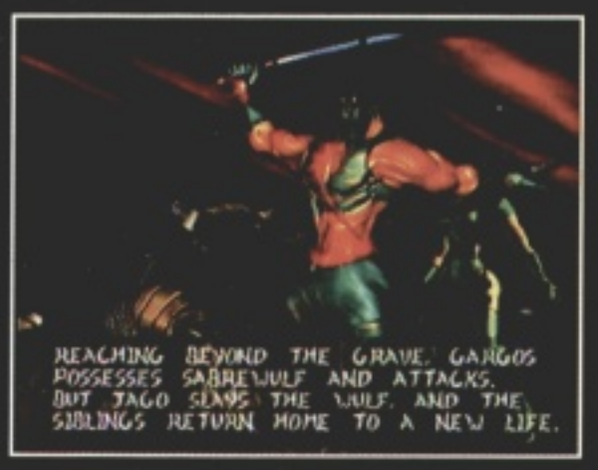
Does this setting smell strongly of *Donkey Kong* or is it just us?

THEY THINK IT'S ALL OVER!

Each of the 11 characters has around four or five different endings depending on the following:

How you defeated your opponents affects the ending that you are shown.

Also the amount of background scenery that you destroyed has a major effect.


REACHING BEYOND THE GRAVE, GARGOS
POSSESSES SABREWULF AND ATTACKS.
BUT JAGO SLAYS THE WULF, AND THE
SIBLINGS RETURN HOME TO A NEW LIFE.

Add both of these elements together and you have about 50 endings. Blimey!

none too small sword) and Maya (a knife throwing, bikini clad Amazonian) are all worthy opponents and, thankfully, human (there was a danger of the *KI* series tumbling down that tedious *Primal Rage* route). Why are the old characters missing? Rare consulted data from little black boxes hidden in the coin-op, and, using info collated from the SNES X-band system in the US, they deduced which of the original characters were the least popular. Simple as that. Out with the old and in with three altogether sexier creations. In addition, there's a new boss, Gargus, who may just be the game's biggest flaw (more on that later), and a couple of hidden characters are tucked away somewhere, but we couldn't locate them – let us know.

Graphically this will blow you away big time! *KI2* boasts a new improved 3D 'effect' which, although not true 3D, does bridge the gap between 3D scrollability and parallax scrolling. For example, in Orchid's environment, moving left and right allows you to actually see behind the parked bombers. Also, this time around the scenery is more interactive. Not in a useful way, but in a satisfying 'must smash those boxes' type way. All this coupled with the zooming in and out effect gives the game so much more depth!

Rare have definitely taken heed of the criticisms voiced at the first instalment. Many felt that focusing on how many special attacks you can pull off, instead of how much damage you cause was a major flaw in an otherwise technically advanced and stunning beat-'em-up. Well, on top of the aforementioned graphical revamp Rare have shifted the emphasis back onto the length of each bout and the skill of the player, rather than the quickest possible knock out and combo memory. However, for those who like the odd combo session, you'll be pleased to hear that a more advanced combo system has been introduced (with a maximum of 60+) along with

Even Gargus isn't immune to a toasty dive to the depths of the earth thanks to Fulgore.

A tiny Jago attempts to dive into a massive and highly detailed zebra.

THE NEW BOSS IN TOWN

With Eyedol no longer around, the tiger spirit returns to the ancient world in the shape of Gargus.

Don't just stand there winged one. Fight!

You don't mess about with the boss on his home turf unless you've had a little practise.

Our main gripe with *KI2* is that after a few attempts Gargus is too easy to defeat.

FINISH HIM

One of the nice things about the *Killer Instinct* series is that the characters don't take their death moves particularly seriously. The second outing is no exception. Check this odd bunch out...

Fulgore summons a cocktail of lasers from the sky. There is no escape.

Jago's climactic river of fire shunts you to the end of the screen.

Orchid's plum singer is not a pretty sight at all. Jump higher!

Spinal traps you with his bony fingers before skull-squash

improved super moves and artificial intelligence. And as if that weren't enough, *Street Fighter/ Toshinden*-esque power-up bars have been added to complete the contemporary beat-'em-up feel. Other gameplay tweaks include: combo breakers (can be used to trigger auto combos), fake combos (used to fool your opponent into preparing a false block) and the ability to throw, ahem.

Overall this is more than adequately improved to warrant its timely development. Rare have finely tuned every element of the game to make it a much, much more satisfying gaming experience. Obviously, the next step is going to be the introduction of a true 3D environment (the Nintendo 64 version anyone?), but whether that will add anything to the gameplay is unlikely. If the new boss Gargus wasn't so darned easy to beat, *KI2* would have been absolutely unmissable, as it stands it's just excellent.

KILLER INSTINCT 2

Nintendo

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
93%	90%	90%
GAMELIFE	**OVERALL SCORE:**	**91%**
89%		

VERDICT: Not, as many predicted, merely a cash-in on the massively popular original. Rare have really thought this sequel through, and, as a result, created a stunner in every sense. If all sequels were this much improved, the world would be a better place.

Rumour has it that the original *KI* will also be on the N64 cart.

Don't just stand there with your streams of fire. Get on with it!

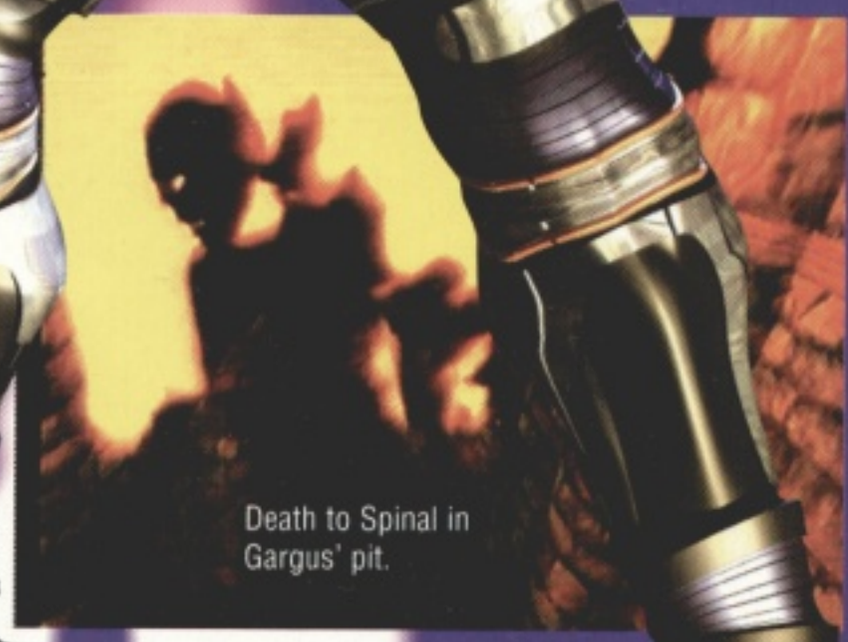
TJ tries to get his leg over.

Possibly the least inspiring background of them all. Could do better.

Is Fulgore trying to unfasten Maya's bra?

This one's just strange. Maya turns into an elephant of all things!

That machine gun move is not entirely fair, is it?



Death to Spinal in Gargus' pit.

It's the most frequently overlooked aspect of videogames yet it remains one of the most skillfully crafted parts of the equation. Yes, we're talking game music. As the cliché goes, you either love it or you hate it. Whatever the case, join us as we trace the noble craft from its birth in the 70s through its development during the 80s to its maturity in the 90s and beyond, taking in its place in the world of Nintendo along the way.

GAME M

In the beginning of videogaming there was no videogame music at all. Music was the sole premise of the 'hit parade', and gamers of the time – we're talking mid-70s here – got their kicks playing *Pong* (or one of its myriad clones) against the aural backdrop of a variably-pitched bleep. This, as anyone who was there at the time will attest, was far from satisfactory, although gamers didn't expect anything else – chiefly because they didn't expect anything in particular of videogames full stop.

When the Next Big Thing arrived in the form of Taito's seminal *Space Invaders*, little changed. Its hypnotic, grinding glurk-glurk soundtrack was certainly a leap on from the likes of *Pong*'s, but not even the merest threat of a jingle ushered forth from its cigarette-stained cabinet. It wasn't until coin-ops such as Centuri's *Phoenix*, whose spaceships-on-starfields graphics were accompanied by a basic but recognisable version of *Romanza*, that ditties began to find their place in videogames. And so the foundations for the art were set, albeit a little sluggishly.

Game music goes home

But this was all going on in the arcades. What was happening in the home? Well, Atari's VCS (aka 2600) and Mattel's Intellivision consoles, released in 1977 and 1980 respectively, mirrored the development of arcade machines: their first games made a lot of zapping, blipping and farting noises but these soon gave way to more sonically adept titles. Activision was one company whose development teams began to push the game music envelope culminating in titles like VCS Pressure Cooker, whose multi-channel tuneage was marvellously jolly and memorable to boot.

Those who felt the need for something other than a joystick as an interface to talk to their machine were able to treat themselves to the delights of the Sinclair ZX81, a home computer with, in today's console terms, a 128th of a megabit of onboard RAM. Despite the extreme efforts of its fanatical owners, however (one magazine printed a type-in listing which would force the machine to make a faint, variable buzz through your TV speaker if you slightly detuned the station), the '81 would only willingly make proper music if you picked it up and used it as a plectrum to strum a guitar.

Its replacement, the Spectrum, improved things by including a puny on-board speaker capable of generating one whole glorious channel of beeps. Hmm.

The American dream

Meanwhile an American machine, the Commodore 64, had trumpeted its way onto the shelves of Dixons and Rumbelows, proudly brandishing its custom sound hardware (a SID chip, for those interested) like a Fender Statocaster against the Speccy's triangle. And lo, it came to pass that it became the game music fan's choice, its four-channel chip capable of manipulating samples, generating complex waveforms and generally being a significant leap over everything else that was around then.

Three names emerged as the machine's most prolific musicians: Rob Hubbard (whose C64 work includes scores of top scores including *Knucklebusters* and *Crazy Comets)*, Martin Galway (the nephew of veteran flute-blower James Galway and creator of memorable tracks for the C64 games *Parallax* and *Rambo* among others) and David Whittaker (who gained a reputation for being able to turn round a tune in less than a week, but whose work frequently lacked the impact and ingenuity of his peers'). Then a fourth figure began to make himself known. After performing musical miracles on the Spectrum (simulating five independent channels among them), Tim Follin was able to unleash his potential with a sound chip that had the balls to deliver gutsy instrument sounds, and he immediately overshadowed the others' work in his first few attempts on Commodore's 8-bit wonder.

The C64's sound capabilities had remarkable effects on the gaming scene. Fans compiled tapes of their favourite tunes and swapped them with fellow fans. Alongside the usual games sales charts, monthly games mags started to run reader's charts covering favourite game music. Rob Hubbard reputedly even released a single off the back of his reputation as a C64 game music composer (although, if reports are to be believed, it bombed horribly). And while the UK could never lay claim to having a game music fanbase to rival that of Japan, a UK publisher went so far as to release a cassette which showcased remixed versions of popular C64 tunes (notably Hubbard's *Crazy Comets* and Galway's *Rambo*) on one side with the special bonus of a limited database program on the other (so that you could keep a computerised record of your music collection, or something).

Tim Follin's guitar-crazy score to *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* is a landmark in SNES music.

In Japan, the NES was growing in popularity but its sound potential fell considerably short of the C64's, leaving Commodore's machine to lead the music march until the next generation of home computer technology arrived in the form of the Atari ST and Commodore Amiga.

Power up!

Musically, the transition from 8- to 16-bit

USIC

tune in or turn off?

computer systems was an uncomfortable one. Many game musicians simply abused the freedom afforded them by the comparatively mammoth memory capacity of new computers by using hefty samples, and even some of the most talented found themselves unable to repeat the levels of their 8-bit success. Rob Hubbard produced little of note (apart from some great rock tracks on Electronic Arts' *Skate or Die*) and soon bid the UK farewell when he went to work as EA's resident musician in the US.

European musicians began to make a name for themselves on the scene and, after contributing a number of classy tracks for German softco Rainbow Arts, Chris Hülsbeck produced the aural accompaniment to Amiga *Turrican*, which he later converted to the SNES in grand style. But it was when that man Follin arrived in 16-bit land that the Amiga was immediately assured a string of groundbreaking game scores – albeit in the unlikely area of coin-op conversions – with a stunning range of achievements in home versions of *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, *Bionic Commandos* and *LED Storm*.

The next wave of hardcore game music fans was born and cracking crews (groups of hardcore underground coders, mainly from Europe) began to rip the musical content out of commercial game releases and use them in demos to the accompaniment of their own flashy graphics. The C64 hadn't been forgotten, however, and one dedicated C64 music fan set out to produce an emulator which not only reproduced popular C64 tracks (over 100 of them) but successfully simulated the actual workings of the SID chip in software.

All change

The focus in game music on home formats shifted to Japan with the arrival of *its* generation of 16-bit gameboxes, the SNES and Mega Drive. Japanese game musicians had no trouble easing into the nuances of their sound chippery and it wasn't long before classics were born in the form of *Revenge Of Shinobi* (Mega Drive) and *Super Contra Spirits* (SNES), the latter of which seeing Konami's in-house musicians on a high point which they've rarely been able to match since.

Sadly, such gems were crowded by a seemingly never-ending supply of pitifully unoriginal synth-rock tracks. The Japanese game musician's rule of thumb at the time appeared to be that if there was even the merest hint of shooting in the game, the action had to be linked with the most tired and predictable fuzz imaginable.

Many of the UK's 8-bit music pioneers had faded from view by this point and, restricted by EA's sports-oriented release policy at the time, Hubbard contributed to the Mega Drive's game music scene in a rather feeble fashion with 'tunes' to games like *NHLPA Hockey* which were in stark contrast to his groundbreaking work in the past. It was left to the Follinster to carry the flag for the UK when he debuted on the SNES with brother Geoff on Tradewest's *Super Offroad Racing*. The incredible *Spider Man and X-Men* followed and his reputation as the most versatile and talented chip musician working in the industry was cemented by the ethereal tracks in *Equinox* and the upbeat numbers of *Plok!*. Here was a geezer that could get his head round *any* system's sound hardware and make it sing like a bird. Or, rather more accurately, like an entire real-life beat combo minus the vocal track.

The SNES has dominated the game music scene for five years with a catalogue of tracks that represent a period when the art truly began to come into its own. In the near future there are a number of titles for the machine – notably *Super Mario RPG* and the other Square and as-yet-unknown Nintendo releases from Miyamoto and co. – that, if not necessarily set to-push the machine any further sonically, will at least underline its power in this department. But many SNES owners are already looking beyond their 16-bit machine...

Enix's *Actraiser* was the first game to tap the SNES's sound potential, although it sounds a bit dated today.

Nintendo 64 and chips, please

Despite its excesses in just about every other conceivable angle, Nintendo's 64-bit wunderconsole takes something of a backward step in the sound stakes by shunning CD-ROM storage and offering traditional sound chip technology.

Nintendo have been deliberately cagey in releasing much technical information regarding the N64's sound capabilities – probably because they

wish to avoid any potentially unfavourable comparisons with their competitors' 'true' sound CD drives – but it's believed that it can practically generate up to 24 channels. Unfortunately, however, it has also been claimed that, because the machine's CPU takes some of the processing strain when music is being generated – unlike in other systems where the sound chip alone bears the task – there's a processing power loss of around one per cent per extra channel in use. If this is accurate then we're going to witness a trade-off in N64 software, with in-game action accompanied by fairly limited soundtracks but intro scenes and non-processor-intensive presentation backed up by full-on 24-track compositions

The Nintendo 64 will have to rely on the musical abilities of the composers to impress games players, as space for soundtracks is at a premium.

(hopefully). If and when Square *do* make the switch back to Nintendo formats, we're already dribbling over the prospect of what *Final Fantasy* composer Nobou Uematsu will do with such potential...

On the evidence so far – from *Super Play*'s experience of the unfinished *Super Mario 64* especially – the Nintendo 64's sound capacity is in excess of that of the SNES, but not in the same ratio as the difference between their comparative graphics capabilities. As with many of the 64-bit system's abilities we'll have to wait to hear its software in a more complete form before the mists finally clear and we discover what the hardware can really do.

Those expecting the 64DD add-on to perform in a CD-style capacity – i.e. able to play prerecorded 'real' music – are likely to be disappointed. Nintendo has made it clear that it does not intend to use the medium for FMV-type footage and they probably hold a similar attitude towards memory-intensive music tracks.

So where now?

So. Despite the irrepressible rise of the compact disc it looks like chip-generated music is here to stay – at least if Nintendo have anything to do with it. Nintendo's own musicians will no doubt set the quality agenda for N64 music with the machine's early software, and we can only hope that UK pioneers such as Tim Follin pick up the gauntlet in the near future. Who knows? Maybe Rob Hubbard is putting the finishing touches to the N64 version of *FIFA* as we speak... Sigh.

NOW HEAR THIS

In the same way there is an 'I Should Be So Lucky' for every 'Don't Look Back In Anger' in 'real' music, there has been an awful lot of crap game music to counter that which nestles under the heading 'Good'. Let's have a look at a selection which have earned their place in the game music hall of fame:

● Future Games (Mastertronic – Spectrum)

One of the first games to feature Tim Follin's work, *Future Games* had a revolutionary soundtrack. Okay, so it sounded fuzzier than that kid with fuzzy hair called Fuzzy when played through the Speccy's on-board speaker, but it ingeniously simulated five 'simultaneous' independent channels of sound from a chip intended for one, and then only primitive beeps running along it, not the drum track and synth-style gurgles that were being strained out here.

● Peter Pack Rat (Atari – coin-op)

One of Atari's least-known coin-ops from the '80s – at least in the UK – Pack Rat was a platform game set on a garbage tip, with you playing the Rat of the title, pottling through pipes and collecting trash. The gameplay was largely irrelevant, though: the laid-back grooves which coasted from its speakers was the attraction. Arguably the only videogame soundtrack that you could play in a darkened, musky coffee parlour and get away with it. *(Eh? – Ed)*

● Sanxion (Thalamus – Commodore 64)

Rob Hubbard's music which accompanied the loading duration of Sanxion will be fondly remembered by any Commodore 64 owner with a functioning set of lugholes. Its screechy, scratchy intro was a landmark in the SID chip's life and the remixed version, which appeared on a free covermounted cassette on an '80s games mag, is a rarity that true fans should search out.

● Out Run (Sega – coin-op)

Totally aware of the importance of game music, Sega ingeniously provided the option to select your preferred tuneage – in the form of a car radio – before you set off in *Out Run*. Let's face it, if you haven't overtaken articulated trucks at over 200 km/h to the accompaniment of Magical Sound Shower, you haven't lived.

THE SUPER PLAY TOP TEN

After much chin-rubbing and ear-straining we've come up with the ten finest most SNES-tabulous game soundtracks ever. Let's rock...

1 Final Fantasy III Square Soft	**6 Spider Man And X-Men** Tradewest
2 Super Castlevania Konami	**7 Equinox** Sony Imagesoft
3 Secret Of Mana Square Soft	**8 Axelay** Konami
4 Plok! Tradewest	**9 Super Contra Spirits** Konami
5 Super Metroid Nintendo	**10 Actraiser** Enix

GAME MUSIC

Tune in or turn off?

● Plok! (Tradewest – SNES)
From the moment the lead character swipes his harmonica up to his mouth in the opening sequence of *Plok!* – and proceeds to hammer out a totally swinging, almost unbelievably real-sounding number – you know that this game is one worth dragging out the stereo system for. A diverse range of pieces and some of the cleverest use of samples make this one of Tim Follin's finest efforts to date.

● Solstice (Sony Imagesoft – NES)
Tim Follin has a habit of making sound chips do things that others don't even think are possible, and it was with the prequel to *Equinox* that he opened Nintendo's own eyes to what their 8-bit machine was capable of. Though reminiscent of the stuff Rob Hubbard had being doing on the C64, *Solstice*'s music was a landmark in NES gaming.

● Space Harrier (Sega – coin-op)
Sega's dabblings in 3D came to fruition with this, a wacked-out trip-a-thonic shooter with a stereo music score that enveloped the player and somehow suited the action on-screen perfectly. Its sampled speech had a lot to do with its effectiveness, but the compositions are the stuff of legend in their own right.

● Rastan Saga (Taito – coin-op)
Although games had featured musclebound warriors in mysterious settings before it, *Rastan Saga* was the first game to provide a musical score to match. Its majestic, sweeping score brings to mind the Conan films and provide an atmosphere few other coin-ops can even hope to achieve.

● Ghostbusters (Activision – Commodore 64)
Way before David Crane did *Amazing Tennis* on the SNES he enjoyed a lucrative programming and design career at Activision, his biggest-selling game being this, the licence from the Harold Ramis '80s comedy. The game itself was shallow to say the least, but its soundtrack was among the first to hint at what the Commodore machine was capable of thanks to a sparkling rendition of the Ray Parker Jr. theme music (complete with sing-along lyrics on-screen!).

● Super Mario Bros. 3 (Nintendo – NES)
Although in musical terms *SMB3* wasn't especially inventive, the cart's inclusion here is vindicated by its unique use of a custom sound chip which boosted the capabilities of the NES considerably. Maybe in years to come we might see an N64 cart of a similar nature...

BIG IN JAPAN

There's no doubt about it, Japanese game music is an institution. Not only are there albums released of games' original soundtracks (OSV – Original Sound Version or BGM – Back Ground Music) but there are also 'arranged' CDs which offer wildly varying versions of the original music – music from Enix's *Dragon Quest* games have CDs of music ranging from a full symphony orchestra to piano, a brass ensemble and even electone(?).

Video Game Music, a compilation of Namco coin-op tracks such as *Xevious*, *Galaga* and *Pole Position*, was, in 1983, arguably the first video game music LP (remember there were no CDs in those days, kids). Produced by Haruomi Hosono – who was, at the time, enjoying success with the Japanese techno-pop group Yellow Magic Orchestra (which had a top-20 UK hit with *Theme from the Invaders*, which used real Taito *Space Invaders* sounds!), the album's tracks were taken directly from the coin-op's chips complete with sound effects and 'shouts' (voices like *Pole Position*'s "Prepare to qualify", which were actually generated by a Texas Instruments chip – remember Speak and Spell™?). By the time a second album arrived (Return Of Video Game Music in 1985) the soundtracks of

The Namco Video Game Music album. It all started here, folks.

games like *Dragon Buster* and *Tower Of Druga* were more 'arranged' and many of the LP's other tracks weren't from games at all but merely inspired by them. But the seeds had been sown and by the turn of the decade the video game music album was firmly established.

Given that there can be several different versions of a game's music (the Japanese are never ones to miss a marketing opportunity) many companies have developed a 'house style' and some even have their own in-house band to perform arranged versions of the tracks. Most Y's game soundtracks from Falcom have a hard rock version by their JDK Band and Sega have compilation albums performed by their own SST Band. Even famous international musicians are sometimes called in to perform orchestral adaptations. Heavens knows what the London Symphony Orchestra thought when they were roped into doing Konami's *Gradius Fantasia* suite but the experience can't be that bad as they've also recently recorded the main theme to Sony's PlayStation RPG, *Arc The Lad*. The orchestral treatment of game music culminates annually with a game music concert which this year was conducted by *Dragon Quest* composer Koichi Sugiyama.

Even though a large majority of Japanese game music isn't, in all honesty, worth the effort of buying a CD in order to listen to in its own right, some games composers have made a name for themselves and their music. Yuzo Koshiro's game soundtracks for games like *Bare Knuckle*, *Super Shinobi* and *Actraiser* have made him a fan favourite (even though his efforts at game design with *Actraiser 2* leave a little to be desired), while more recently Square Soft music supremo Nobou Uematsu's particular brand of pseudo-orchestral grandeur evident in the *Final Fantasy* series have not only been a great success (there are no less than 25 *Final Fantasy* CDs available) but have also led to him making the jump to real music with his solo album Phantasmagoria.

Should you feel like treating your ears to some top quality game music there are a few avenues open to you in the UK. **Compact Disc Services** on (01382) 776595 will try to source titles for you even if you haven't got a catalogue number. **Otaku Publishing** on (0181) 699 2199 carry a variety of game music titles in stock and are willing to source anything they don't carry. Be warned, however, that Japanese import CDs carry a premium price tag and you should be prepared to pay anything up to £30 for a recent single CD and considerably more for multi-disc albums such as the OSV of *Final Fantasy VI* (aka *III* in the West) which runs to three discs.

Listen to the soothing notes of Nyan Nyan Panic on this Konami CD.

***Super Play* gets together with the most talented videogame musician the SNES has ever seen, to talk '70s prog rock bands, Nintendo's poor chip design and hating games...**

THE SUPER PLAY INTERVIEW

TIM FOLLIN

close to the edge

Super Play*: How did you get involved in videogame music?*

Tim Follin: My brother Mike was already in the computer industry, writing a Spectrum game called *Star Firebirds*. I'd just bought a Spectrum and was tinkering with machine code. I had worked out a sound routine which made a phasing sound, and Mike asked me if it could play tunes. I tried, they could, and the tune went into the game. Following that, I worked out a three channel routing, which went on his next game, *Vectron*. That was before I left school. Then, after an enjoyable but aimless year at music college, the company Mike was working for, Software Creations, offered me a job writing music. Just what a bone-idle waster like me needed!

SP: *What influences your work?*

TF: While I was writing for the SNES and Amiga, very little 'real' music influenced me. I tended to find myself writing whatever style of music sounded good on the chip, which usually led to writing music which was all gloss and no substance *(Surely not – Ed)*. Surprisingly, I was more influenced by outside music when I was writing on the C64, probably because the sound it made was so unrecognisable in real music terms that there was no pressure to mimic outside music. Ideally, CD-ROM should give ample opportunity to write 'proper music', but unfortunately, unless there's a 'proper music' budget to go with it, this isn't the case.

"I actually hate all videogame machines"

SP: *Whose work in the videogame music field do you admire, and how about in the field of music in general?*

TF: I've always felt bad for not knowing much about other people's game music, especially when they ring up and know all about mine! I always listened to other music to keep in touch with the standard, but I've never been very interested in the whole thing. On a broader scale, I grew up listening to Yes, Genesis, Vangelis, Queen, even ELO – having two older brother largely conditioned what I listened to! I've spent most of my time in the last few years listening to Vaughan Williams and Wagner. And I also like Howard Blake, who's written lots of film scores.

SP: *Which of your pieces are you particularly pleased with? Do you have favourites?*

TF: The pieces that stick in my mind are the tunes for the Amiga version of *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*. They were the only ones that started to approach an atmosphere for me.

SP: *How do you actually create your music on the SNES?*

TF: We never used MIDI to compose music on the SNES – instead we chose the sensible method of typing raw data into a PC assembler in the form of numbers representing note pitch and length. Although to the casual observer this was a form of clinical insanity, we used this system right up until our last project. Never again!

SP: *How important is the use of samples to you?*

TF: Unfortunately, on sample-based machines, samples are much more important than the actual music is. It's back to the thing about it being all gloss and no music. Sampled music is essentially about suspending belief. If you sample a guitar string, you can't just use it like a keyboard sound; to keep up the illusion you have to make it function like a real guitar. But because you usually haven't got enough sample memory to maintain a very convincing illusion, you have to limit what you can do with it, thus compromising the actual music.

This is still true when using professional modules for CD music, despite the improved quality. Keyboards sound like keyboards, no matter what sample you're using...

Follin's influences include some top seventies proggy rock. Four sides, four tracks...nice.

SP: *You seem to have found some favourite effects over the years, to the point where it's possible to hear one and instantly known that it's your work. Was this intentional?*

TF: Absolutely not! If you notice any similarities between pieces, it's probably more to do with my lack of imagination than anything else!

SP: ***Have you any interest in getting involved with game music CDs, bearing in mind the huge market for them in Japan?***

TF: When I was in Japan, before the SNES had even been launched, we saw a number of NES music CDs, which seemed pretty sad and pointless. Then again, it's an easy way to get a CD published with the composer's name on it!

SP: ***What's your favourite machine to work on?***

TF: I actually hate all videogame machines. *(Blimey – Ed.)* The best machine to work on is my PC, when I'm not writing music.

SP: ***How long does it take you to create music on the SNES, and how much memory do you use?***

TF: I haven't actually looked at a SNES for nearly two years. But I remember taking an unprecedented amount of time writing the music with Geoff [Tim's other brother] for Equinox; probably something like six months! That took about 80K.

SP: ***Do you ever get the opportunity to do anything with your old tunes – perhaps update some of them using modern gaming kit?***

"I pushed the SNES as far as I could at the time"

TF: A bloke from Norway called me recently, asking me to revamp some of my old C64 tunes for a CD he's going to publish. At the moment, though, the mere thought of it sends a chill down my spine.

SP: ***You made the Speccy simulate 5 channels of music. How far did you push the SNES?***

TF: I pushed the SNES as far as I could at the time. Listening to some of it now, though, there was plenty of room for improvement!

SP: ***You obviously have significant programming skills. Did you ever entertain the idea of actually writing games instead of music?***

TF: I could program little sound routines and effects, and once I even programmed a mini-subgame for a Spectrum game called *Future Games (Ah, I remember it well – Gamefreak).* I've never thought I could program a whole game, though.

SP: ***How did you go about converting other peoples' work, ie Bad To The Bone and the other tracks from Rock 'n' Roll Racing?***

TF: I recorded them from record or CD and listened to them hard on an old tape player so I could rewind and pause quickly, without that crap logic control thing annoying me!

SP: ***Have you ever written music for anything other than videogames?***

TF: Videogame music is the only outlet that pays at the moment, so although I write music for my own entertainment, there's no real focus to it. Geoff is currently writing with the aim of going into television music.

SP: ***How much interest do you have in games themselves?***

TF: To be honest, absolutely none whatsoever. I don't even play *Doom*, which is on my PC!

SP: ***The advent of CD systems appeared to herald the death of the chip-generated game soundtrack yet Nintendo came along with a non-CD system to ensure otherwise. Do you think this a good thing or a bad thing?***

TF: Oh, definitely a bad thing, and I think most musicians will agree with that. Nintendo are really not remotely interested in the quality of game music, or the sanity of the people who have to use their badly designed sound chips! I wouldn't entertain the idea of working on that system, but if anyone would like to give us some CD work...

SP: ***In what direction do you see game music going?***

TF: I see it going in the kind of direction you take when you've drunk too much coffee and gone blind.

SP: ***Do you think it's currently benefiting from the current influx of 'real' tracks (from the likes of Leftfield and PWEI)?***

TF: I think that if you say a game has a soundtrack by someone famous it really doesn't matter whether it's brilliant or it sounds like fat boiling. Other than for financial reasons, I can't see why any company would rather employ an in-house musician than a professional artist. It's a noise in the background – that's enough for most people!

SP: ***So you don't think game music is important as part of the whole game package?***

TF: Well, you expect something to listen to while you play, and sound effects aren't usually up to much, so music is important, but I'm not sure how important. Trying to match music to a game demands that the game has something about it which you can hook onto, to give an angle from which to write the music. However, this is usually lacking. In fact this is what drove us away from the industry, but if anyone has an interesting project they would like BRILLIANT music for, get in touch with us!

SP: ***What are your plans for the future?***

TF: Since well before I got into music, I've wanted to get into film making. In fact, I've always seen music in a film context.

For the last five years or so I've been writing bits and pieces with the aim of getting together something substantial to show for myself.

In the last year I've been doing this non stop, and I'm finally nearing something tangible. I mean, I might completely fail at it and be picking up chip papers ten years from now, but who cares? I'll be dead soon... (Laughs)

SP: ***Well, we look forward to your next stuff in whatever form it takes. Thanks for your time, Tim.***

TIM FOLLIN SOFTOGRAPHY

ZX Spectrum

- Programmed single channel 'phase shift' routine and music for *Star Firebirds* and *Subterranean Striker*
- Programmed three-channel sound routine and music and music for Vectron
- Programmed a subgame for *Future Games* (!)
- Arranged music for *Bubble Bobble* on the ZX Spectrum 128
- Programmed five-channel sound routing and music for *Future Games*, Agent X, *Chronos* and *The Sentinel*

Commodore 64

- Designed music driver and wrote music for *Black Lamp*, *Peter Packrat*, *Bionic Commandos* (winner of that year's 'Golden Joystick' award), *LED Storm* and *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*

Commodore Amiga

- Designed music driver and wrote music for *Bionic Commando*, *LED Storm*, *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, *Gauntlet 3* and *Sly Spy*

Nintendo Entertainment System (NES)

- Designed music driver and composed music for *Sky Shark*, *Magic Johnson's Fast Break*, *Target Renegade*, *Solstice* and *Silver Surfer*

Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES)

- Designed music driver and wrote music for *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* and composed jointly with Geoff Follin for *Super Off-Road*, *Equinox* and *Spiderman and the X-Men*

Sega Mega Drive

- Designed music driver and composed music for *Time Trax*

CD-ROM

- Composed jointly with Geoff Follin for *Prim*, *Firearm*, and an unreleased Funcom game. Has recently written music with Geoff for a potential interactive adventure game idea

As well as being a fine game, *Plok!* has some of the most cleverly crafted music you'll hear on the SNES.

TELLING TALES

Even though Toy Story is one of the most impressive games the SNES has seen in its five-year history, its creators, Southport-based Traveller's Tales, remain a relatively mysterious clan of codesmiths. Super Play caught up with their top bod for a few tales...

Jon Burton, director of Traveller's Tales, has been there from the very beginning. It was him, in fact, who *made* it all begin: "The company started while I was finishing my degree in computer studies. I met a guy called Andy Ingram who wanted someone to program a game that he was doing graphics for. I was messing around on an Amiga at the time and so we started what became our first game, *Leander*."

Ah yes, *Leander*. For those of you unfamiliar with it (and we'll forgive you – the game wasn't a commercial smash by any means), *Leander* was one of the most console-like games produced on Commodore's ill-fated glory machine. From the front-end to the graphics to the silky gameplay, it had Japanese game values written all over it, making it a natural choice for conversion to the Mega Drive a year later.

Speaking to Jon, who lists the *Mario* series and LucasArts' titles (both the *Star Wars* tie-ins and adventurey stuff like *Monkey Island*) as his favourite games, it's easy to see how the game became influenced so. "We just thought the Amiga needed a nice, smooth console type game," he notes, immediately poised to concede that, "Japanese games are better in terms of gameplay and game design."

Working in a team of just nine people – although the company's other half, Tales Two, employs an extra six staff – Jon is only too aware of the differences between the various approaches taken to game development around the world. "Sega, for instance, have over 50 people just working on gameplay design. Western games, especially those from England and Europe, are technically better – they push the hardware more as they typically have less people programming the game, and

Woody the cowboy – all skinny legs and big boots, but audiences have loved him.

this also allows one person to show technical flair," he claims. "In Japan they can have up to 20 or more programmers on one product which means they all have to work with each other, which in turn means the efficiency of the code is compromised. Sounds scary, really!"

We've established, then, that the old 'size isn't everything' adage also applies to the world of videogame development; a case of 'it's not what you have but what you do with it', perhaps. Jon both designed and programmed *Toy Story*, and, while many developers would no doubt see this as restrictive, he believes otherwise. "Being programmer and designer allows hardware to be pushed further," he believes. "New machines remove you further from the hardware and harder deadlines mean more programmers per version. This means less benefit in programming and designing at the same time. Besides, you can't program every game you design or you can't expand the company. I'll carry on designing a few different games, but only programming one of them at any given time."

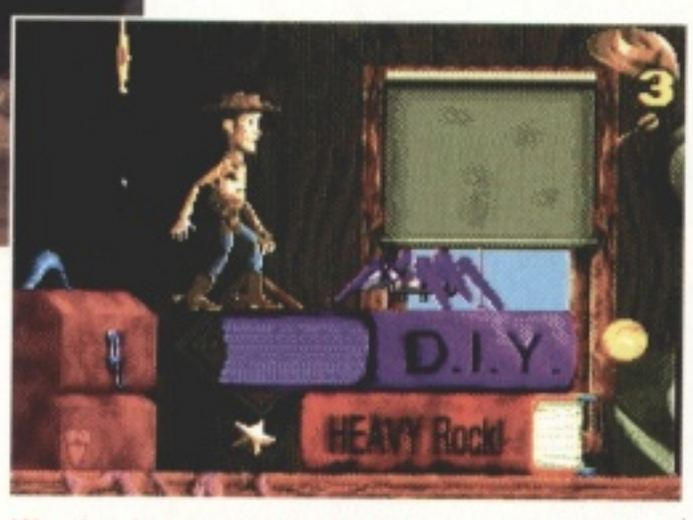
"Being programmer and designer allows hardware to be pushed further"

Slinky the dog cowers as Rex threatens to show him his new dental flossing technique.

Toy Story the film is the labour of LA-based computer graphics maestros Pixar. How did the development relationship work out? "Basically Pixar supplied us with the animations for Woody and Scud," Jon says. "But we had great trouble in getting Pixar to render the animations with the correct lighting to allow us to convert to 16 colours nicely, although it all worked out okay in the end."

So it was relatively trouble free? "Well, for the lead version of the game on the Mega Drive we only got the final Pixar animations two weeks before the game was submitted to Sega for final approval. And, as the game had to be approved first time or it would miss the release date if the film, we couldn't afford to rely on Pixar for any animations, so we rendered all of Woody's animations just in case they couldn't deliver them on time." Blimey.

Despite not being able to call upon development resources the size of Nintendo or Rare, Traveller's Tales have pushed the SNES just as far as those two giants. "We have full-size characters – the height of the screen – walking around, and obviously we have the *Doom*-style section," touts Jon when asked what he feels are their greatest achievements in the game. "Most of the techniques used concern getting much larger sprites on the screen and animating them at 30 frames per second. And, of course, adding the *Clockwork Knight* type 3D effect to the platform sections."



Woody takes a stroll through Sid's room. Watch out for those mutant toys, pal.

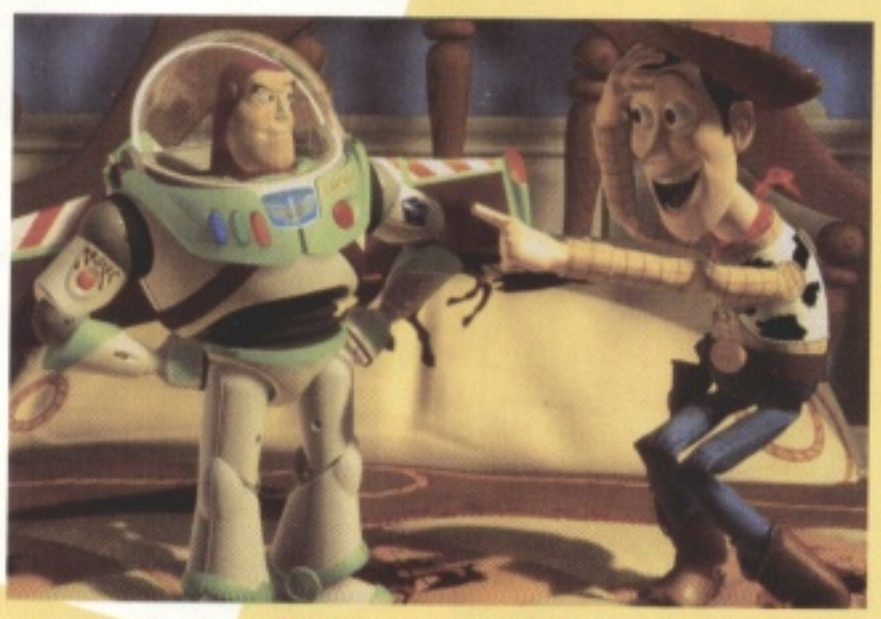
The results are nothing short of astonishing. But why have they taken this long to achieve? The SNES has been around since 1991, yet games of the quality of *Toy Story* and *Yoshi's Island* are only just appearing. Jon's theory is straightforward: "I think the main reason is that machines have always been pushed further the longer they are around, which is due to the learning curve involved in discovering what hardware is capable of, linked with new techniques for achieving new or faster effects being developed. We always like to push the hardware harder and harder in each new game which is why *Toy Story* is bigger and better and faster than our last game, *Mickey Mania*."

"Japanese games are better in terms of gameplay and game design"

Of Nintendo's recent software victory he remains less than blown away: "Well, in the case of *Yoshi's Island*, a lot of the improvements over *Super Mario* are refinements in gameplay, and a Super FX chip, which is cheating really. I mean, it's easy to write a more impressive game if you slap a new FX chip in the cartridge..."

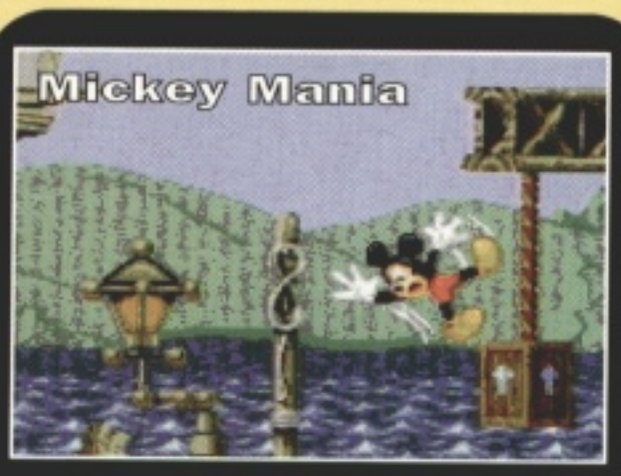
Finally, what does he think of the Nintendo 64 from what he's seen so far? "The games look great but the hardware is meant to be a bitch to program. I hope the machine isn't a disappointment when it comes out, but I suppose that *Mario 64* will sell it. I'll be buying one for that reason alone. Well, unless Nintendo want to give me a development system, of course..."

Well, on the evidence given so far, *Super Play* certainly can't see any other company more worthy of one...



Buzz Lightyear stands proud as Woody mocks his mode of attire.

To find out what *Super Play* thinks of the video game, turn the page...



TRAVELLER'S TALES SOFTOGRAPHY

Leander	Amiga	Nov '91
Galahad	Mega Drive	Nov '92
Dracula	MD/SNES	Mar '93
Puggsy	MD/MegaCD/SNES*	Nov '93
Mickey Mania	MD/Mega CD/SNES	Nov '94
Toy Story	MD/SNES	Nov '95

* SNES version finished but never released.

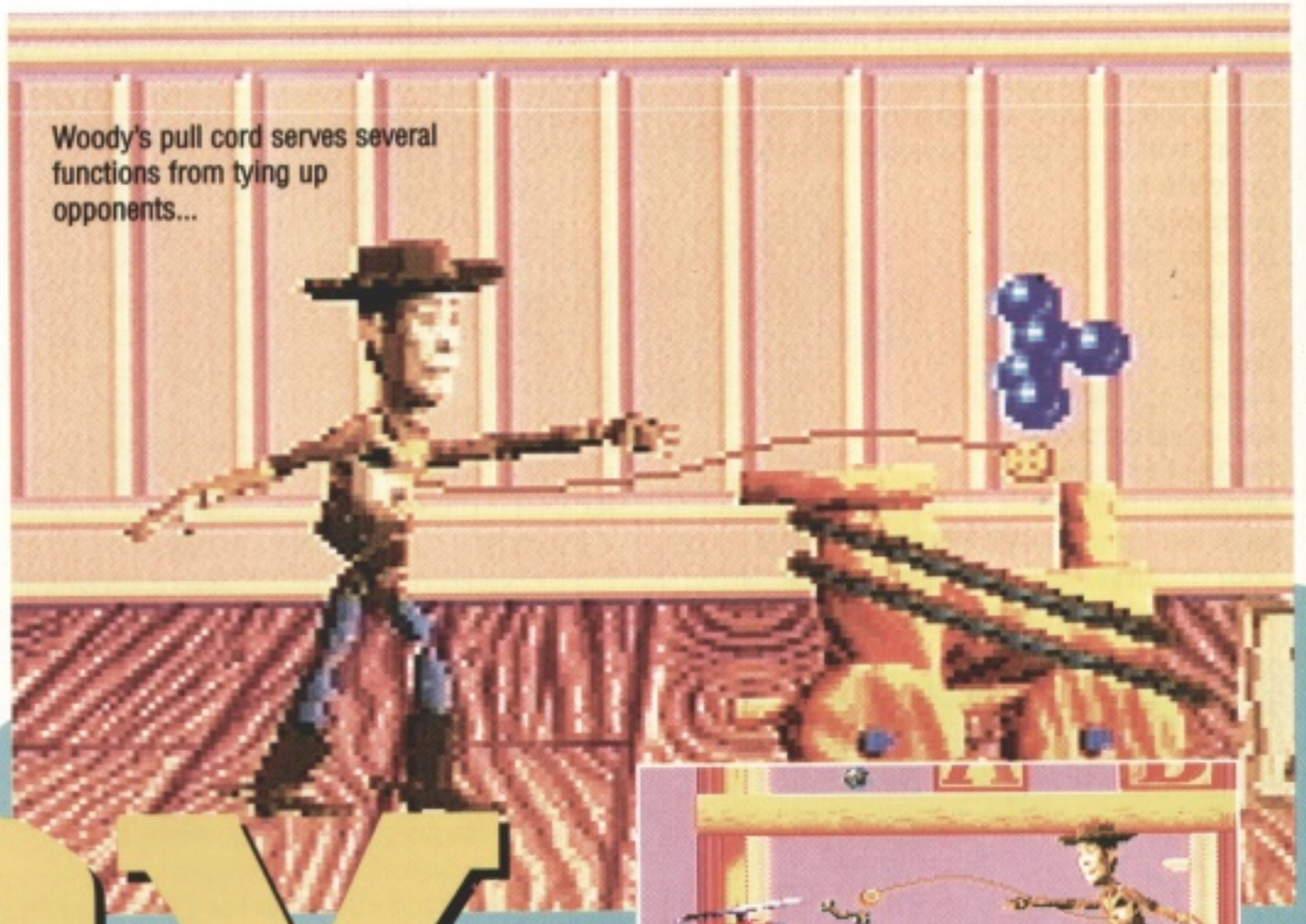
Super Play's review of the SNES version of Toy Story is over the page

UK Release

Game: Toy Story
Publisher: T•HQ
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Price: £65 approx
Release: Out soon
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 32Mbit

Will Toy Story the game be a serious case of toy joy, or is it just cashing in on the hype?

TOY STORY



Woody's pull cord serves several functions from tying up opponents...

...to inflicting damage...

...to the most entertaining aspect, serving as a swing rope.

Ah, the side scrolling platform game! If there was ever a game style that needed to be put to sleep it is certainly the dreaded side scroller. But due to some inopportune advances in data compression, games like the *Donkey Kong Country* series and, now, *Toy Story*, have actually advanced the look and feel of the platform game enough to breathe new life into the rotting corpse of its outmoded gameplay.

Of course, if a game style is going to wear out its welcome, it is wise to design the game around a story that holds some appeal. From what we've seen of *Toy Story* the movie so far, it backs up its superb technical achievement with a story and characters which have charmed US audiences and looks certain to do the same here in the UK. A game featuring a cowboy, a space ranger, and Mr. Potato Head

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Everyone's favorite characters from the movie populate the Toy Story videogame. Unfortunately, the only character you are able to play as is Woody.

Woody

The odd man out. Guide him through level after level of adventures to regain his position as Andy's number one favourite toy.

CHEATER, CHEATER

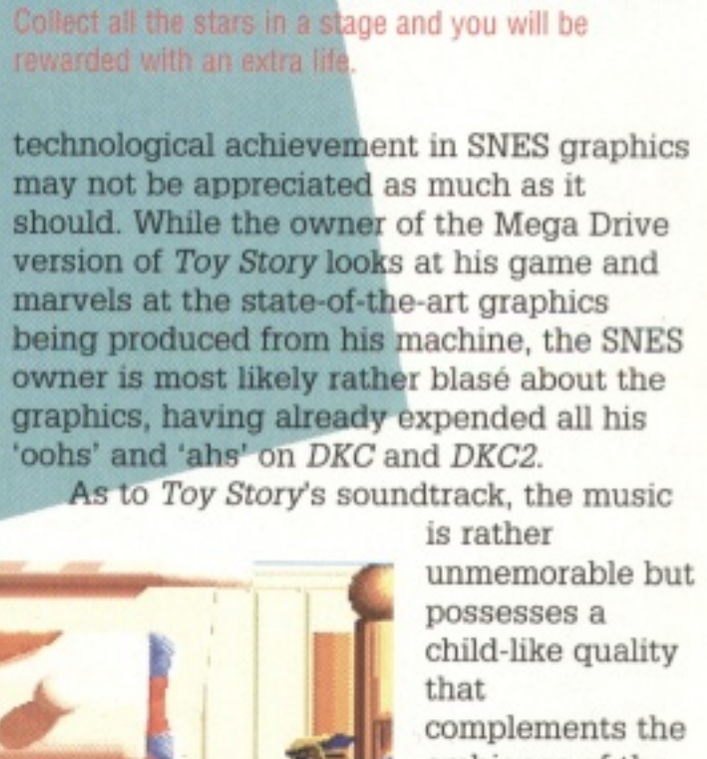
Okay, so the game is a little hard. But if you can't win by playing fair, how about using these cheats? Go ahead, who'll know?

To become invincible, go to the dresser with the bucket of army men on top in the first stage. Stand on the lower dresser drawer and hold Down on the control pad for about six seconds. Once the star in the upper left-hand corner of the screen starts spinning you are invincible!

Once you've entered the invincibility code just pause the game at any time and press the Select button to skip to the next stage!

certainly seems to have mega-hit written all over it. However, it does seem rather strange that a film noted for its advanced computer animation has spawned a 16-bit videogame. In all likelihood, the marketing marvels at Disney noticed that most of the film's target audience own either a SNES or Genesis. Not exactly the way to design the best game, but it should sell a ton.

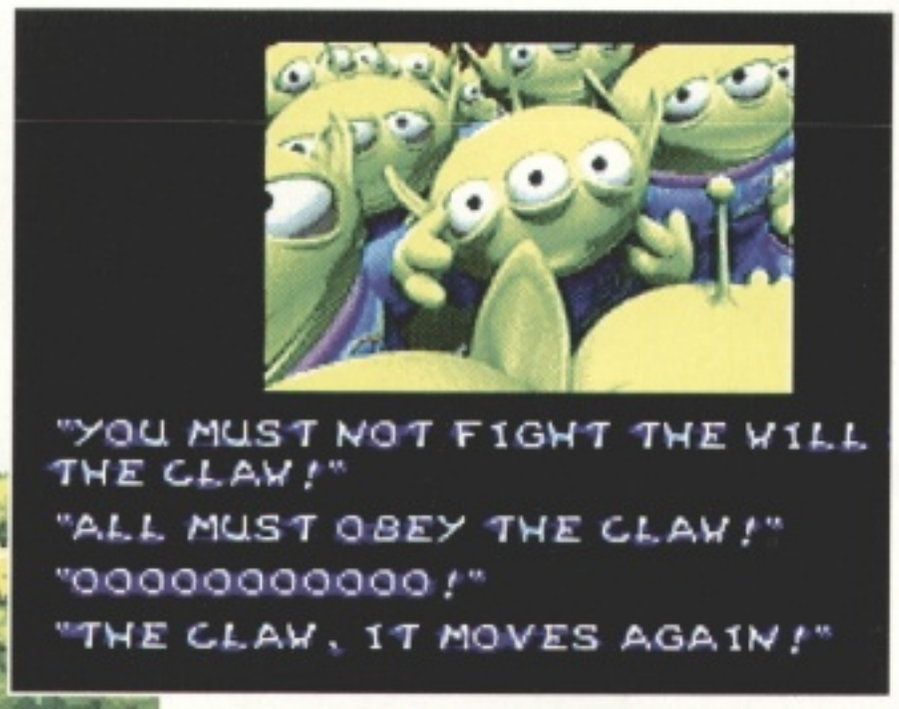
But as 16-bit games go, *Toy Story* does boast near top-of-the-class graphics with 3D rendered characters that were created using the identical process that they did in the making of the film. The animation is also top notch, with a fluidity and accuracy that once seemed unattainable on the SNES. Taken from a graphics only perspective, it certainly appears to the player that he is actually controlling the film's main character, Woody. Unfortunately, all this technological achievement in SNES graphics may not be appreciated as much as it should. While the owner of the Mega Drive version of *Toy Story* looks at his game and marvels at the state-of-the-art graphics being produced from his machine, the SNES owner is most likely rather blasé about the graphics, having already expended all his 'oohs' and 'ahs' on *DKC* and *DKC2*.



Collect all the stars in a stage and you will be rewarded with an extra life.

Pay attention to the sound, it will warn you of dangers that lurk just off the screen.

As to *Toy Story*'s soundtrack, the music is rather unmemorable but possesses a child-like quality that complements the ambiance of the game. *DKC2* most certainly provides superior music with its simple but rhythmic groove – the epitome of pseudo-hip. The actual sound effects of the game are also unremarkable but adequate for the nature of the beast. Once again the comparison to *Donkey Kong* finds the sound effects slightly lacking, but there is nothing that really elicits any derisive comments.



Still, any chance to hang out with these guys again isn't all that bad.

If there is any particular component of *Toy Story* that evokes the widest array of opinions it is certainly the gameplay. Despite the haranguing regarding the side scrolling nature of the game, *Toy Story*

Green Army Men

Green Army Men – Cannon fodder. Send them to do the dirty work and pay them less than minimum wage.

Etch-A-Sketch

An artist on a par with Rembrandt and MIchaelangelo if he could just manage those tricky diagonal lines.

Rocky Gibraltar

Would have made it to the top of the World Wrestling Federation if it weren't for that weasel Hulk Hogan.

R.C. Car

Erratic handler but cuter than a Morris Mini.

Buzz Lightyear

Best friend and main competitor. Delusional and dashing, Buzz proves that the road to friendship isn't always a smooth one.

Mr.Potato Head

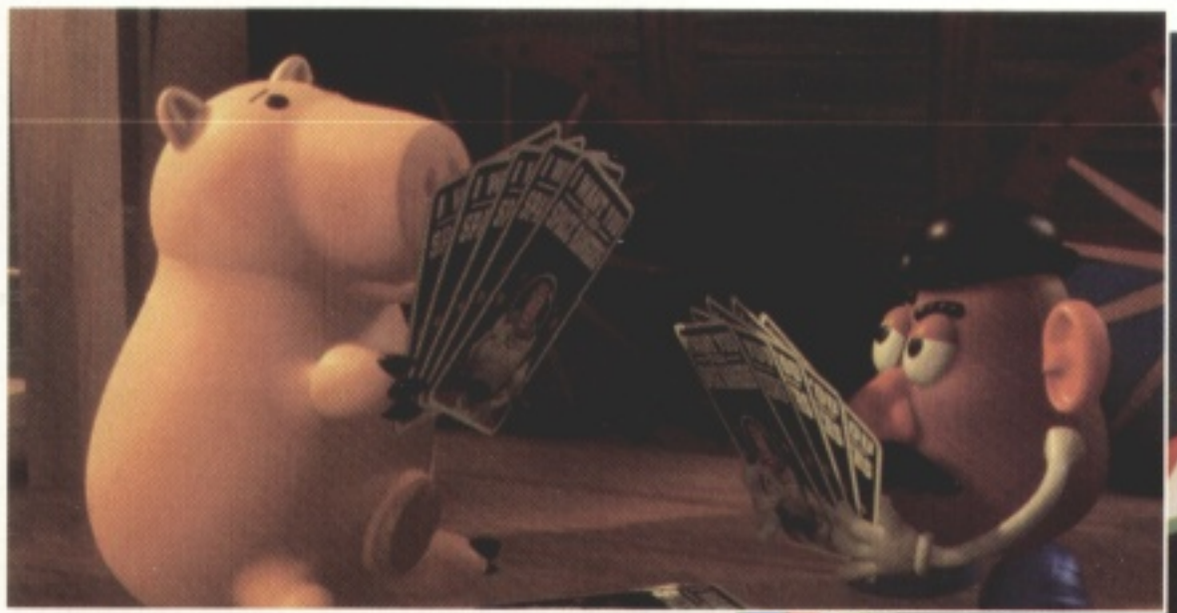
Everybody's favorite deep-fried side dish and master of the one liner.

Hamm

He's a pig, he's a bank, he's multi-talented.

Rex

Substance abuse problems cost him the lead in *Jurassic Park*. *Toy Story* role revitalizes his career.



We couldn't resist showing you a couple of shots from the movie – here Piggy the Bank and Mr Potato-head in gambling mode.

For your information, Toy Story the movie got a massive 38/40 on that Moviewatch program on telly.

actually varies the gameplay quite nicely with an occasional scaling section, and even a *Doom*-type level. Even the side scrolling stages display some originality by not constantly limiting the level objective to safely guiding the protagonist from the left to the right. Objectives like co-ordinating army men to move a baby monitor do much to liven up the traditional gameplay. Still, as above average as *Toy Story* ultimately is, it is not devoid of some questionable game control characteristics. The control interface lacks the directness and feel that is the hallmark of every classic side scroller like *Super Mario Brothers* and *Sonic the Hedgehog*. Too often the clunkiness in the controls lead to bad command inputs which hasten the demise of the player's character. This seems especially curious as the market for this game seems focused to younger children and the clumsy control interface may serve to frustrate them in short order. Mind you, this awkwardness in the control characteristics is not bad enough to ruin the game, but it does take some getting used to and definitely increases the game difficulty more than really necessary.

As for the actual play value of *Toy Story*, that all depends on how irritated the player is with the control problems. With five levels and seventeen stages, *Toy Story* is not the most elaborate side scroller ever made, but it certainly offers an exceptional amount of gameplay. The rather high difficulty of the stages coupled with the clumsy control ensure that most players won't finish the game in a couple of sittings. Once the game is completed, replay value is the bigger question mark as there is no compelling reason to go back and play besides the obligatory 'explore every nook and cranny' aspect.

Ultimately, despite being a side scrolling platform game, *Toy Story* has a lot going for it. A charming story, popular characters, superior graphics, and inventive gameplay all couple to produce a gaming experience that is enjoyable if not quite the ground-shaking, genre-busting revolution that is always hoped for.

● **Roger Burchill**

Scud

Viscious and sadistic, every neighborhood has at least one of these canine terrorists.

Squeeze Toy Aliens

Mindless, bug-eyed conformists – also known as society in general.

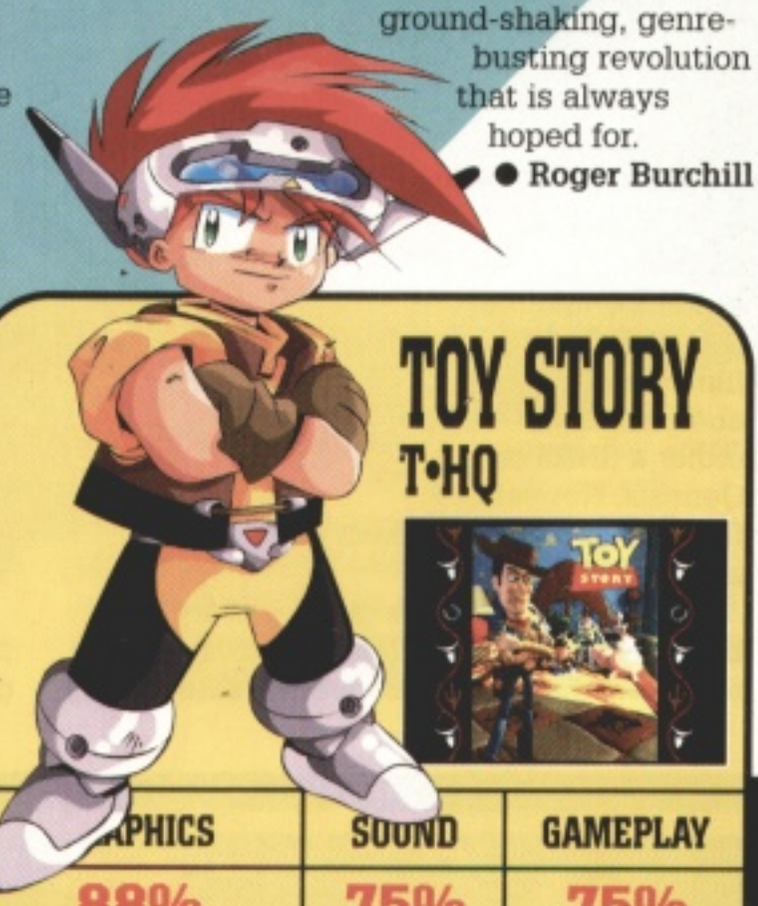
Mutant Toys

Society's outcasts, but rest assured they will eventually inspire a new fashion trend.

"O.K. SERGEANT, THIS IS A CODE RED! WE NEED A RECON POST DOWNSTAIRS. NOW HOW CAN I HELP?"

"SIR! REMOVE THE LID ON THE BUCKET OF SOLDIERS SO MY MEN CAN GET OUT. THEN FIND THE BABY MONITOR ON THE SHELF AND KNOCK IT DOWN TO MY MEN BELOW."

The storyline adds to the entertainment value by following the basic plotline of the movie.



TOY STORY

T•HQ

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88%	75%	75%
GAMELIFE	**OVERALL SCORE:**	
70%		79%

VERDICT: For the Mega Drive, *Toy Story* marked a new high point in graphics and gameplay. But on the SNES, this side scroller can't help but be compared to *Donkey Kong Country 2* and that's a comparison where it will lose every time.

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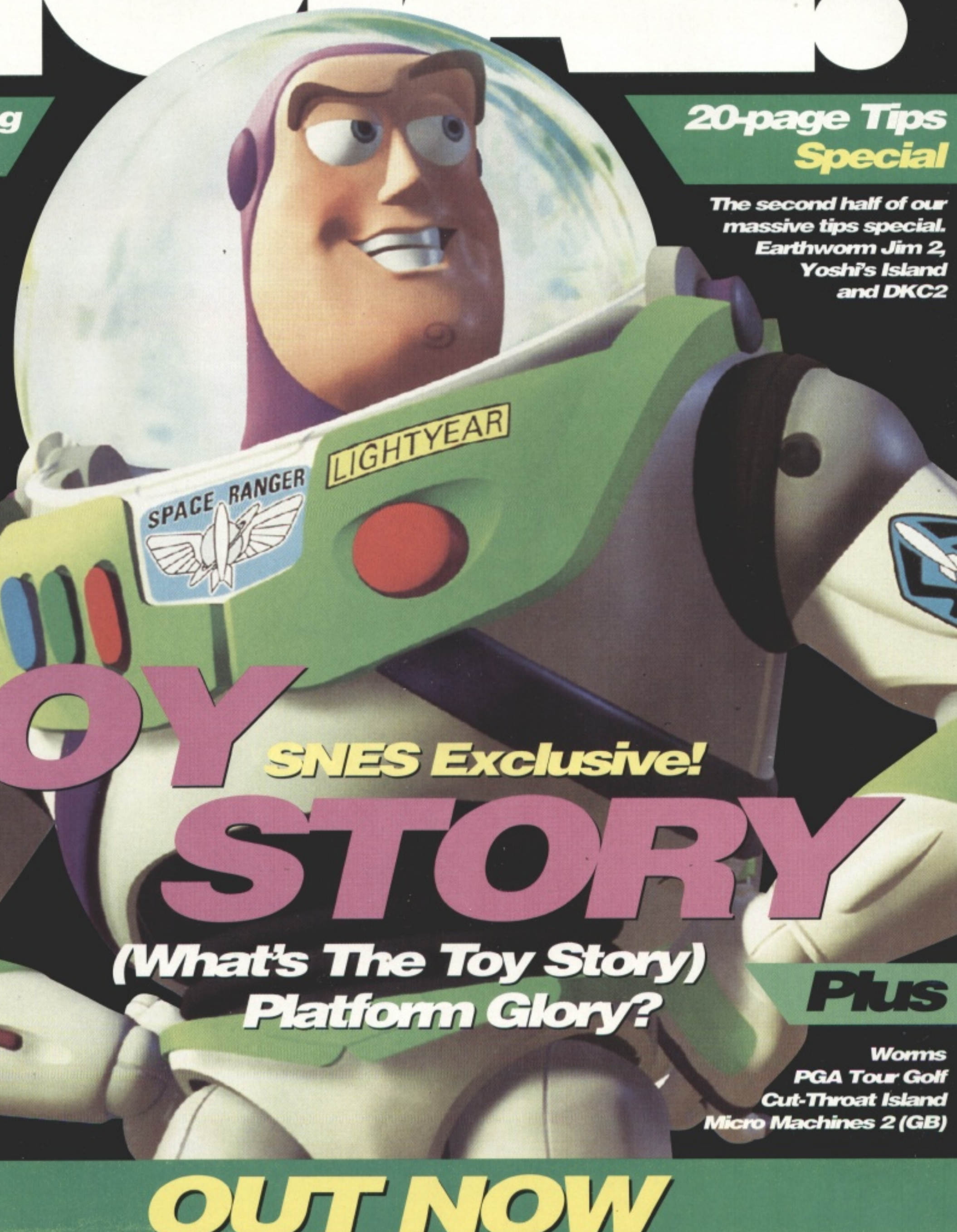

TOY STORY

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(What's The Toy Story) Platform Glory?

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OUT NOW

GOOD IDEA, BAD IDEA

Given that this is really a follow-up to *Assault Suits Valken* (US/UK title: *Cybernator*), rather than *Front Mission*, we thought it would be clever to highlight common elements. And when we heard that Omiya Soft's roster boasted some of the original Masiya development team, we were eager to see how they'd improve a four-year-old classic. So this section was going to be called 'Compare and Contrast', see... But *Valken* being brilliant and *Gun Hazard* being otherwise has necessitated some last minute changes. Instead we present... 'Good Idea, Bad Idea'.

SENSIBLE ARMAMENTS

VALKEN

Although your Vulcan gun only shoots in a limited number of directions, the bullets spread and spray a little at random; thus effecting (with rapid fire) 360° of firepower.

360 degrees of death.

GUN HAZARD

Oh no – the enemy has cunningly positioned himself at 52.5° to me, and my Vulcan now fires in a perfectly straight line. It is completely impossible for me to hit him from this (and several other) positions.

ENVIRONMENTAL ABLATION

VALKEN

Stray bullets and missiles will impact on walls and floors, leaving man-sized craters and twisted metal. Shoot the tank marked 'DANGER' and, heh heh... BADOOM!

Japanese Release

Game: Front Mission: Gun Hazard
Publisher: Square
Developer: Omiya Soft
Price: Check with your importer
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 24 Mbits

Imagine buying a cart and finding that, because of some odd power glitch, the game's hyper-invulnerable cheat mode engages automatically and can't be switched off. You start playing anyway, eager to see what it's like, and the excitement of New Game Fever is enough to keep you interested. Within half an hour, though, you finish a dozen levels and the boredom sets in. You might as well be watching a video of someone else play through the game, for all the input and effort that's required to progress. Besides, it's all starting to look a bit repetitive. And that's exactly how it feels to play *Gun Hazard*.

I should admit that I had my doubts about this title from the start. I'd followed the Japanese previews, the promo videos and all of Square's press releases closely, and one thing was noticeable by its absence. Strangely, for a supposed mobile suit shoot-'em-up, I hadn't seen a single screenshot with lots of action and explosions going on.

FRONT MISSION GUN HAZARD

The dropship is your mobile base of operations. It's where you can change your weapons and recharge.

As it slides effortlessly across the Atlantic, however, we ponder its mode of propulsion.

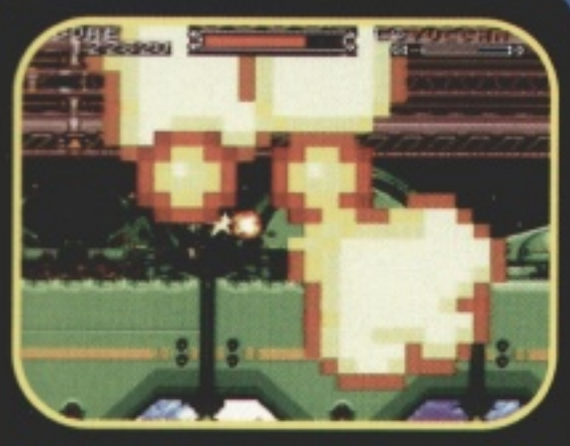
Greta Garbo is the first of many celebs to make an appearance in *Gun Hazard*.

Grace Kelly makes a damn fine drop ship pilot.

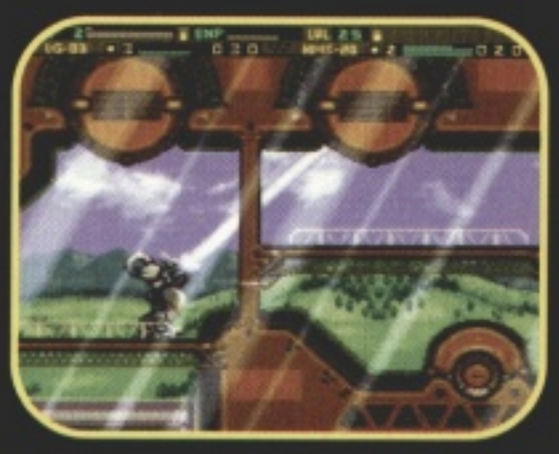
STORYLINE

VALKEN
Aha, a few brief messages that swiftly establish my purpose, my enemy and my amorous relationship with the Versis communications officer. Perfect (although I understand they cut these from *Cybernator*, the philistines).

GUN HAZARD
Oh dear – box after box of overpunctuated text that takes longer to read than the mission takes to complete (I'm not kidding). And you can't just click through it, no matter how many times you've read it before.



GUN HAZARD
Particular bits of the foreground can still be chewed up, but nowhere near as much. Shoot this remarkably familiar tank and it doesn't even dent. Boo!



REWARD

VALKEN
Blimey, I've found some power up goodies by taking an alternative route and exploring the dangerously busy missile bay tubes.

GUN HAZARD
Hmmm, a long human-sized tunnel with a repair pack at the end. How did I know it was safe to get out and explore? Because my map showed every detail to me, clear as day, before I 'd gone anywhere near it. Doh!

ACTION

VALKEN
Aaargh! Millions of exploding things with a grudge against me! Shoot and shield! Shoot and shield!

GUN HAZARD
YOOHOO! Why, hello! So nice of you to join me. I was beginning to think I was the only moving object on this level. Fancy a scrap? We could – oh, he's run away.

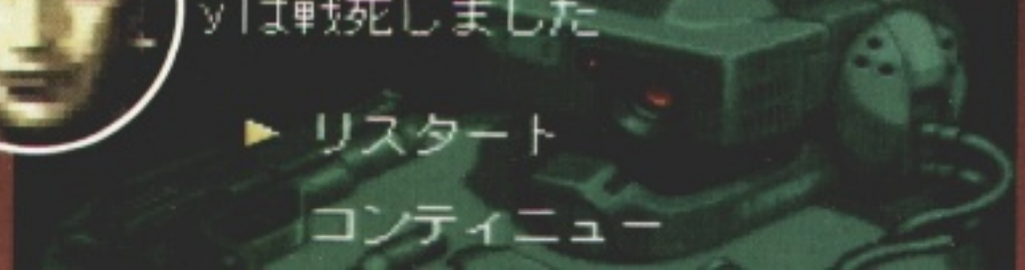
Even fifty foot battle suits with arm-mounted missile racks cannot protect you from the judgement of *Super Play*.

The late, great Frank Zappa.

Steve Jarratt, editor of Future's *Official Playstation* magazine, doing his best 'Popeye' Doyle.

The dodgily still-with-us Phil Oakey.

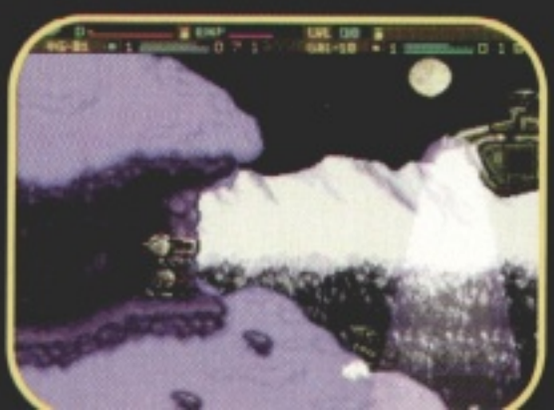
You can still work through the game in Japanese, but it's neither as friendly nor Westernised as *Front Mission*.



VARIETY

VALKEN
Here I am sabotaging the rocket propulsion units cunningly employed to turn a meteor into a missile. Next I'll be tumbling through the atmosphere to earth, catching up with my drop ship at the last moment, before storming an enemy stronghold alone.

GUN HAZARD
Yawn – yet another level where I simply have to walk from left to right without dying. And unless I choose to jump up and down on my own grenades, dying isn't that easy to accomplish.

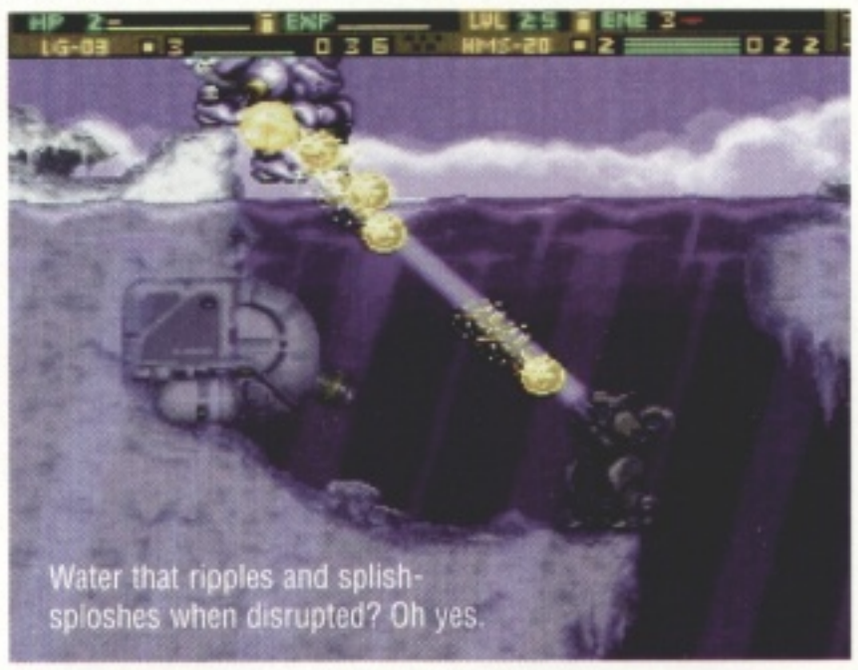


And now I know why. It's because there isn't any. Yes, believe it or not, they've avoided that terrible old SNES slowdown problem by making sure that you only ever face one to three enemy sprites in any particular area of the level.

I've seen some highly flawed game concepts in my time but get your head round this. *Gun Hazard* is a shoot-'em-up with RPG aspirations where, if you can't beat a boss first time, you don't try again and look for the winning tactic: you just replay an easier level, kill some grunts, build up a bigger energy bar (more experience means more hit points) and buy some heavier guns with your booty before returning to the boss and waltzing all over its chromium face. Oh, and if things start looking bad at any point then just pause the game, pull another repair pack out of your inventory and restore your health to full. No. No. No. No. NO.

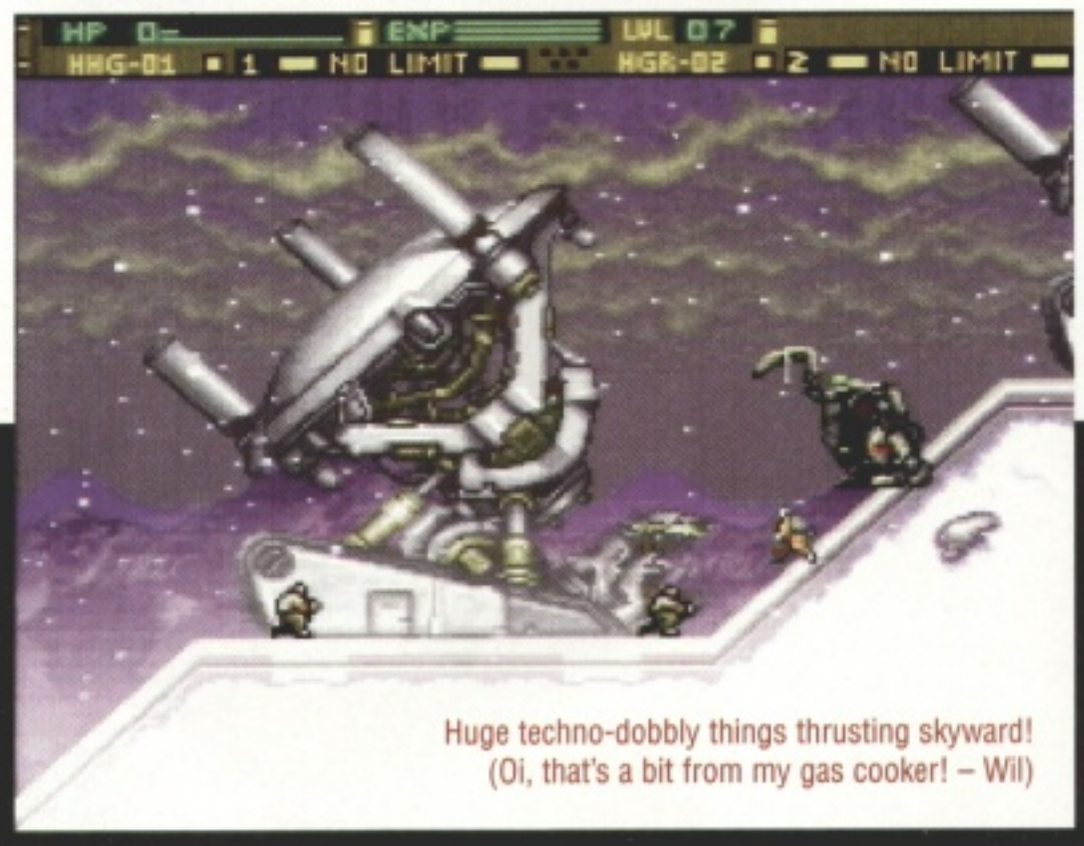
Okay, so it's not without its moments of brilliance. Being able to jump out of your mech and run around doing vulnerable human things when the storyline dictates is the sort of playing twist that could have made *Gun Hazard* great. Ah, if only they had exploited it.

Unfortunately, having put everything in place for some reasonable 50ft stomping mayhem, they completely forgot to employ a level designer. Oh, somebody tagged all the graphics together, sure: but what you

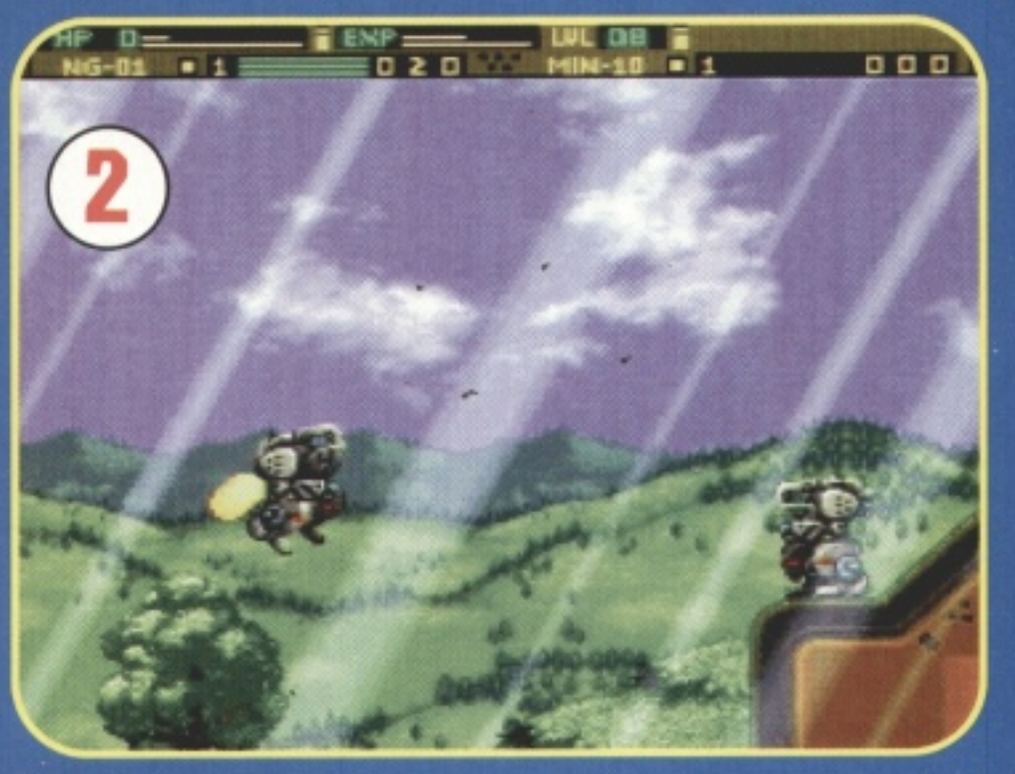


Water that ripples and splish-sploshes when disrupted? Oh yes.

Right: Genoce the Mercenary drives a sporty red mech with a big gun. We know what his problem is, right girls?



Huge techno-dobbly things thrusting skyward! (Oi, that's a bit from my gas cooker! – Wil)



FAT CHANCE

This is where I highlight heinous crimes of game design in the hope that I never see them again. Hence the title.

1 This autoscrolling desert level demonstrates the complete absence of challenge. Simply equip the mech with a tackily old-fashioned three-way 'spread gun', start the mission and hold fire. No, sod that – paste down the button with some sticky tape and go make a cuppa. You'll return from the kitchen to see the message "Mission Complete".

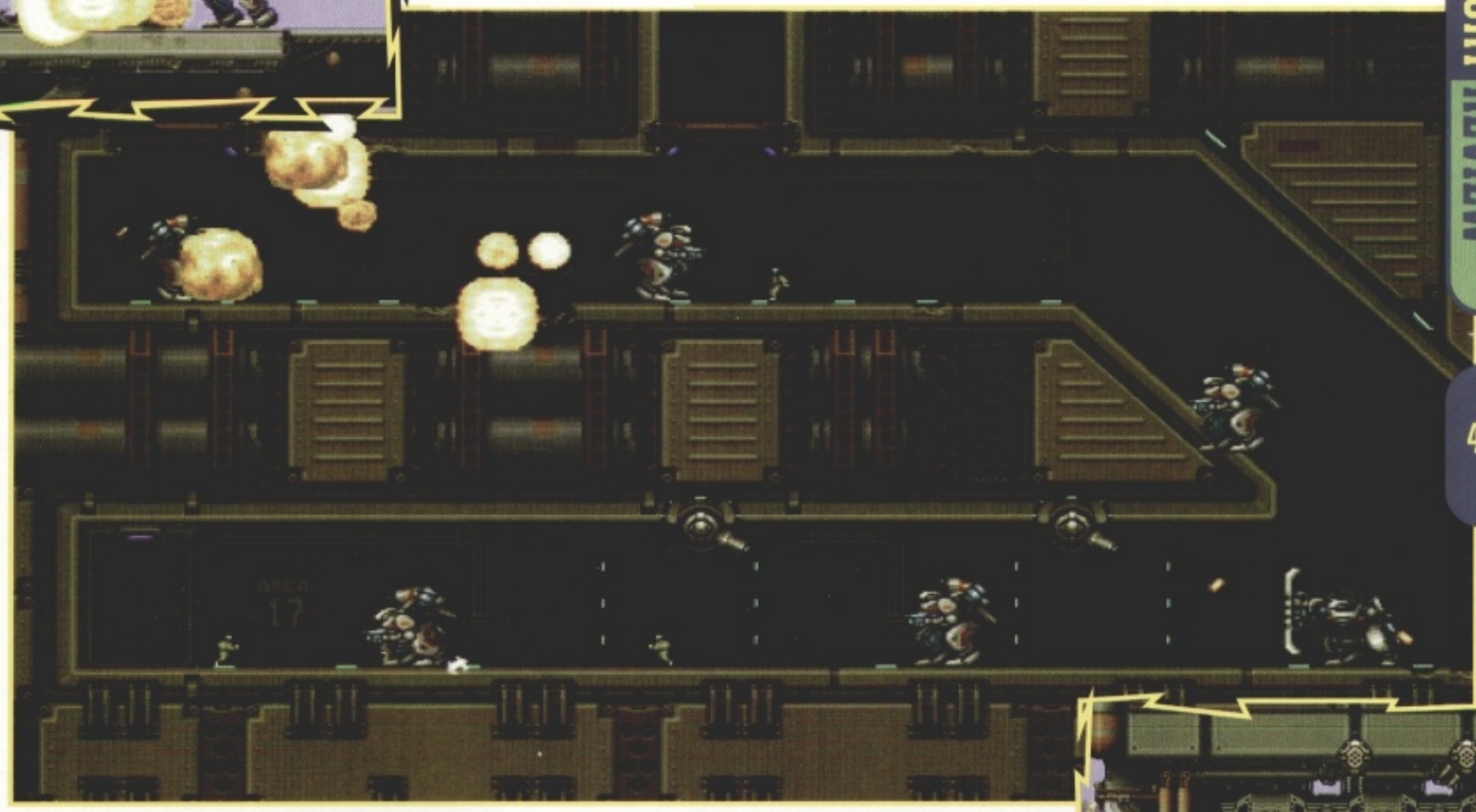
2 Fighting is pointless. After buying a new jet pack for my suit, I found that I could complete some missions in around twenty seconds by simply flying across the top of the screen and avoiding everyone. Think about that for a moment. What devastating new horizons of gameplay have been laid before us, eh?

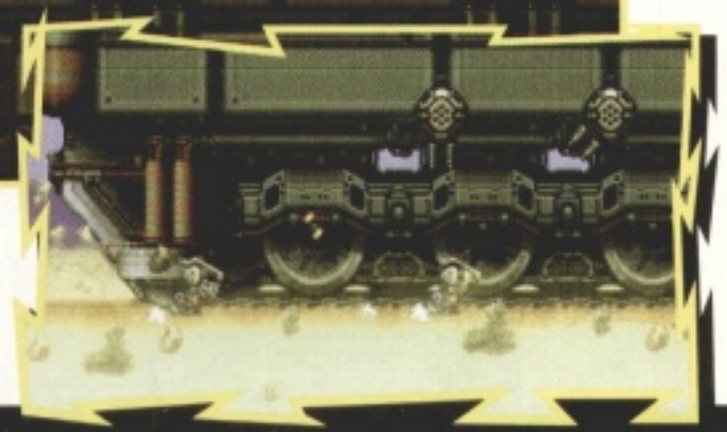
3 Having fought your way to the end of a level, the action constantly interrupted and paused by messages from your drop-ship pilot, you then have to read through TWO MINUTES of text boxes and TWO separate non-interactive conversations between the major characters. Then the boss attacks. Should you die here, you'll have to start the level from scratch and – oh yes – sit through the same text ALL OVER AGAIN before getting another crack at the boss. Even if it was written in English, with dialogue by Raymond Chandler and SJ Perelman, I doubt I'd be any better disposed toward it third time around.

Then again, I only died because I was busy taking screen shots.

To get in, go back to an earlier level and rescue the blonde boss (see Fat Chance no.3).

Dashing alongside this land cruiser, you blast in through the roof and discover a *Super Star Wars*-esque maze section: alas, you have 800 hit points and the only threat comes from a little bloke with a pistol. Tediously easy.





You might think it impossible to miss a train this big, but it appears I have done exactly that thing. Twice.

LEMON SQUEEZY

Hope I've stressed how shockingly easy it is to play through *FM:GH*. However, in accordance with new government guidelines on journalistic impartiality I'm obliged to present an upbeat summary of the vaguely half-challenging bits – the bosses. If you're careless and you haven't bothered to replace those repair packs or upgrade your weapons then you might derive 45 per cent's worth of pleasure from these sections.

This still leaves us with the big question: are teenage Japanese players simply rubbish at video games? *Gun Hazard* recently picked up scores of six and seven out of ten in top Nipponese mag Famicom Tsushin, so somebody must have liked it.

No subtlety here. It's a great big gun on legs, and it can only shoot straight forward at regular intervals. Didn't take them long to run out of ideas, eh?

When the laser scanners pass over your mech, that cross-hair locks on to the position and a napalm air strike soon follows. Keep dodging, though, and you can trick them into shooting the blue-suited boss for you.

Bit of a pantomime horse, this fellow – the torso splits off and tries to punch you from the air while the legs blast away with a thankfully concealed cannon.

Racing through the tunnels to keep up with bunnyhead makes it tricky to get a shot in. Pack a UVG to shoot him from underneath and jump through the gaps in his tri-pronged rocket attack.

get is mission after mission of walking from left to right, shooting pathetically feeble enemy units, until you reach the other side of the level. And those isometric maps are simply deceptive, because there's not an ounce of strategy or roleplaying in the entire game.

So you're left with combat – which is dull, the only sign of artificial intelligence being that heavily damaged opponents run away. Exploding mechs and vehicles will damage you if you're anywhere near them, so physical scrapping with your metal punch – a joyous pursuit in both *Valken* and *Front Mission* – is now harmful and thus pointless. And as soon as you blow up something, immediate enemy regeneration plants another identical unit behind your back (um, even if you've just looked at your map and seen nothing coming for miles). So there's no advantage to be had from mass destruction.

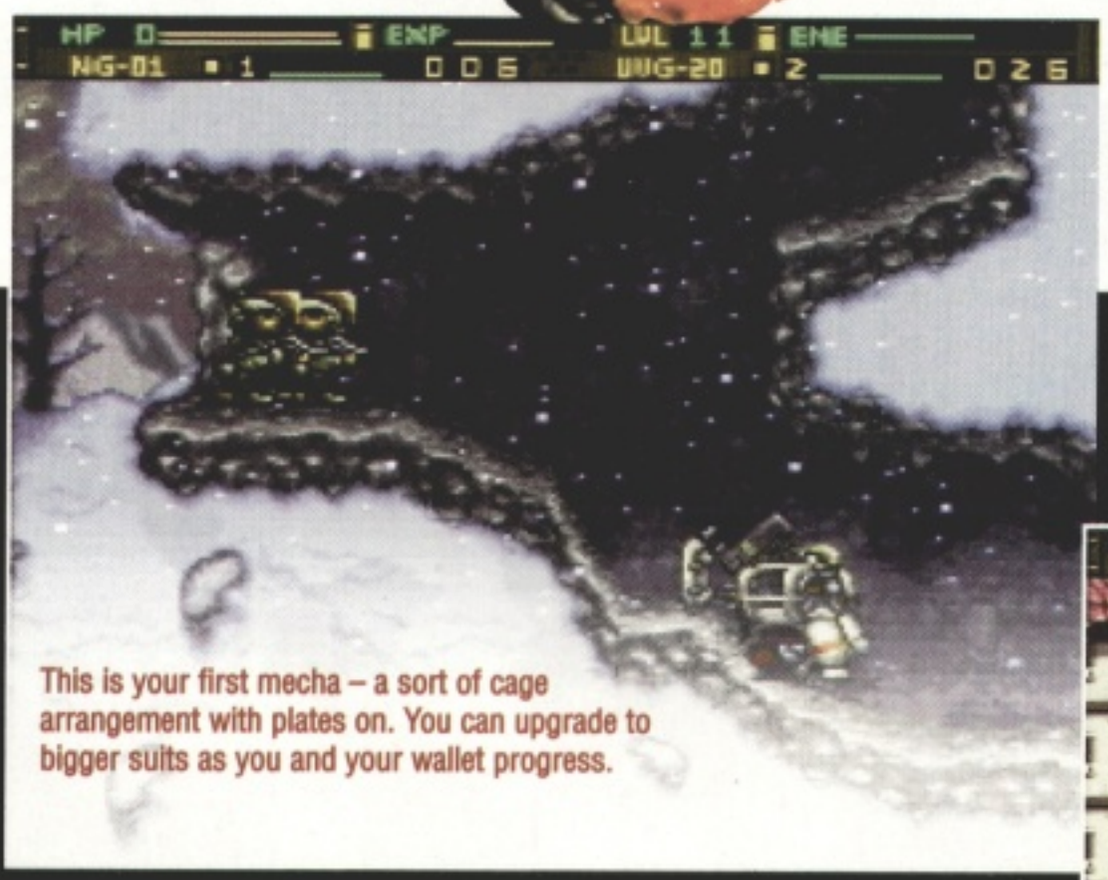
You can usually count on Square for stunning sound and graphics, but even here there's something careless about it all. Sure, the jungle level with its animal hubbub will make you 'hhhhmm...' like the woman in the Munchie ads. And the developers must have been chuffed with their *EWJ*-beating lens flare effect, because they use it just about anywhere they can squeeze it in. But you only have to dig out *Valken* and stick it in the SNES for two minutes to appreciate *Gun Hazard's* inferiority.

While my drones blaze away, I can concentrate on shielding. Neat.

Even the characters are lacklustre stereotypes, not aided by the confusing milieu. When you've seen as much mecha as we have then you begin to appreciate differences in mobile suit design, and *Valken*'s mechs are nothing like *Front Mission's*. *Front Mission* is a gritty political near future scenario (Patlabor), with grenade launchers and caterpillar tracks; *Valken* is gleaming space opera (Gundam), with laser turrets and anti-gravity pods. This attempt to encompass both falls uncomfortably between the two, with a consequent loss of style and identity. The only reason for it, I'm sure, is marketing: *Valken*'s an old game now, and they knew they could shift more carts to loyal punters by selling it on the back of *Front Mission*'s success.

So there you have it. Enough memory to hold *Valken*, *FFII* and *Sim City* on the same cartridge (or *Valken* thrice, if you wished) and instead we get some feeble, ill-conceived old tat. If it wasn't for the excuse to blast through *Valken* again, this would have seriously ruined my month.

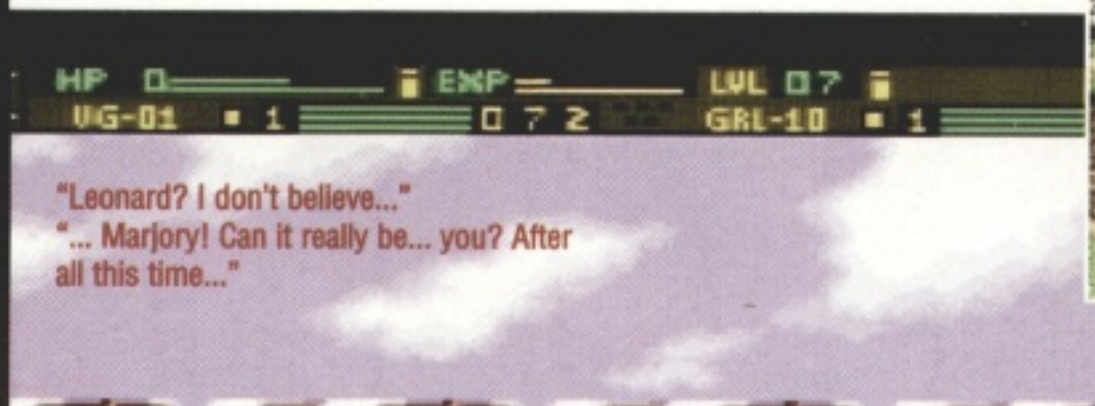
● **Zy Nicholson**



This is your first mecha – a sort of cage arrangement with plates on. You can upgrade to bigger suits as you and your wallet progress.

Take a closer look at that wall cannon: Valken or Mega Man?

Talk to rural types in this hamlet. Hello, country bloke!



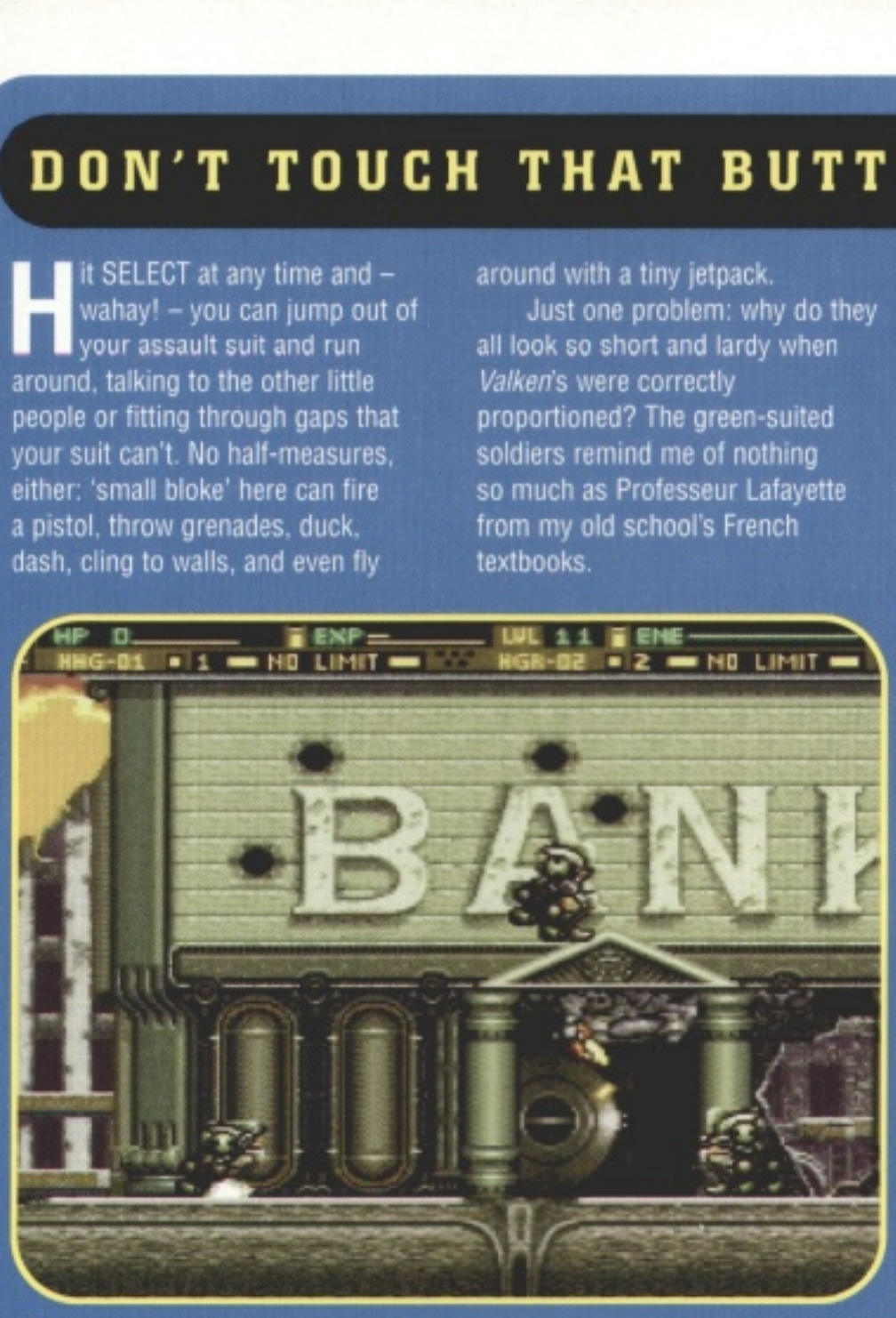
"Leonard? I don't believe..."
"... Marjory! Can it really be... you? After all this time..."

Below: George Sanders explains the villainous plan afoot.

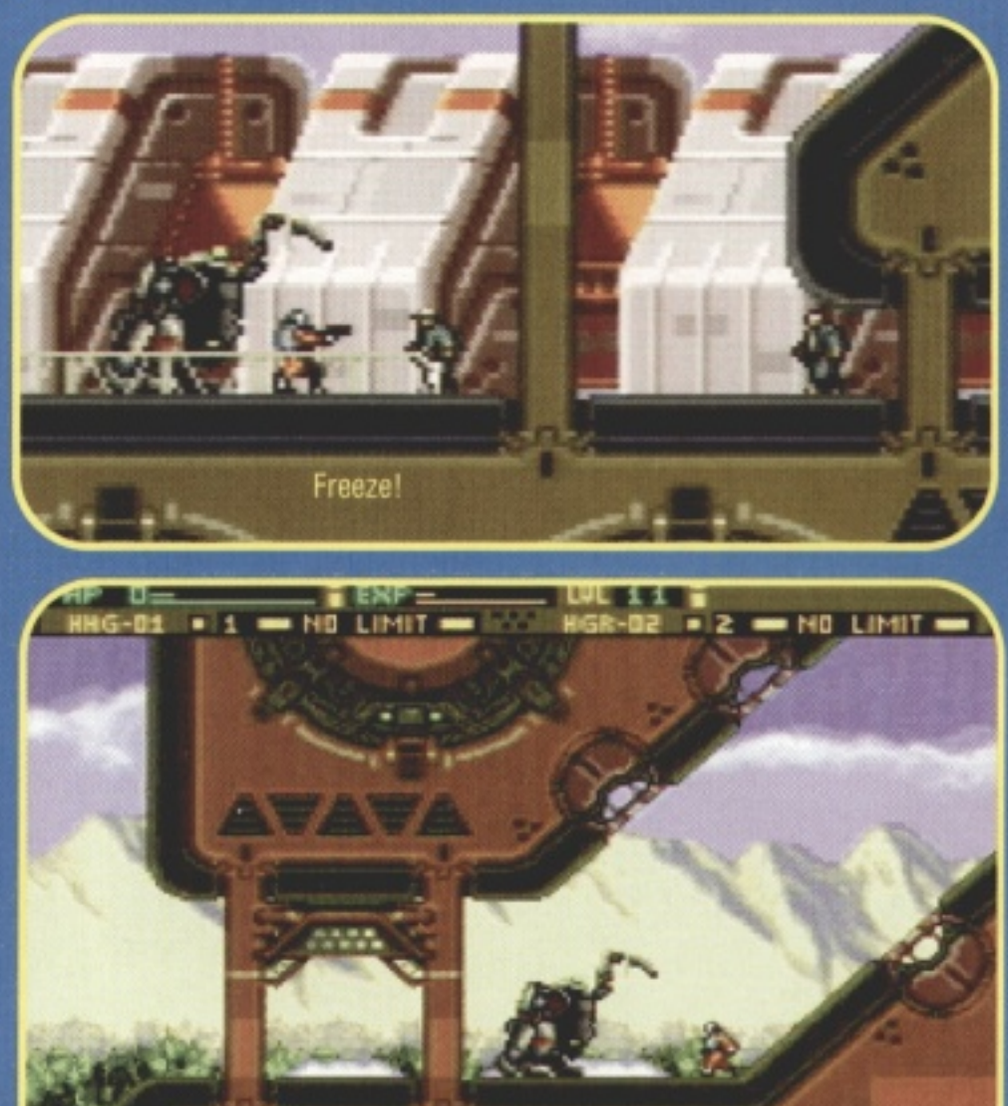
DON'T TOUCH THAT BUTTON!

Hit SELECT at any time and – wahay! – you can jump out of your assault suit and run around, talking to the other little people or fitting through gaps that your suit can't. No half-measures, either: 'small bloke' here can fire a pistol, throw grenades, duck, dash, cling to walls, and even fly around with a tiny jetpack.

Just one problem: why do they all look so short and lardy when *Valken*'s were correctly proportioned? The green-suited soldiers remind me of nothing so much as Professeur Lafayette from my old school's French textbooks.



Trouble: I left my mech ten blocks back. Thank heavens for Acme™ jetpacks.



Looks tactical, yes? Wrong. These maps just show you what levels you've cleared. We were led to expect a bit of strategy thrown in but it's sadly non-existent.

FRONT MISSION: Gun Hazard

Square (Japan)

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88%	82%	29%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	45%
35%		

VERDICT: Fun Hazard, more like. Devoid of action, tactics, playability or challenge, *FM:GH* is the Dusty Bin of mecha gaming. And it's published by Square. The rot sets in...

FINAL FIGHT TOUGH

Capcom dip into their recycling bin for a quickie release, but is *Final Fight* really tough or could it better be labelled Final Fight Lemon Squeezy?

Look at the size of this bus! Let's dance!

Someone please stop my packet flashing!

Your thighs aren't big enough. Be gone!

WHAT'S THE PLOT?

As with all beat-'em-ups there's a very vague plot concerning the kidnap of a beautiful young girl and the exploits of a dastardly muscle-bound thug. Unfortunately we didn't bother to translate this story as we thought we could make up a better one...

"Greetings Guy, with your open shirt you are really spoiling us."

"Damn that Guy and his open shirt, I will find my own!"

"We must stop dungarees man from burning the city for shirts."

"What do you think of my open shirt? It's new."

"Take that shirt off Lucia! We've got a job to do."

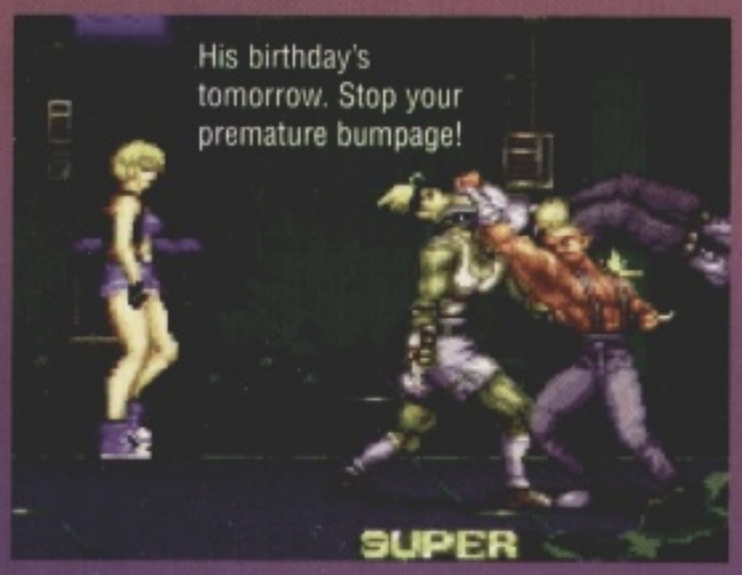
"Anyone fancy popping into town for a bit of a scrap?"

The first *Final Fight* outing was the very first beat-'em-up to get an official UK SNES release and subsequently received a big *Super Play* thumbs up. Next came, somewhat obviously, *Final Fight 2* (reviewed in issue 10) which although not radically different to its predecessor earned a jolly respectable 75%. Now, having dispensed with the numbering system we have the third episode in the saga – *Final Fight Tough*. Nearly three years have passed since number two (this is getting confusing) and the genre has moved on considerably – have Capcom plumped for more of the same, is the third installment radically different, just what is going on?

Dean bows before the majesty that is new formula Ready Brek.

Japanese Release

Game: Final Fight Tough
Publisher: Capcom
Developer: In-house
Price: Check with importer
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 2
Cart ROM: 24 Mbits

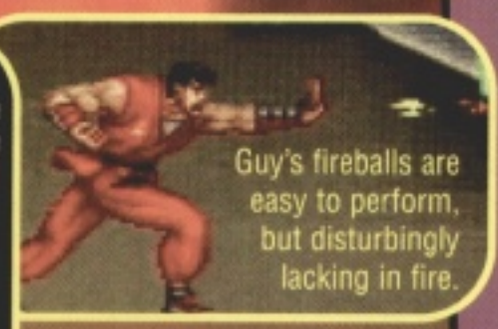


GUY

Guy likes nothing better than pretending to grasp an apple while pointing down to his left shoe. Having recently lost around six stone, Guy finds that most of his belts are far too long these days. Add to this the baggy trouser element and his love of the open shirt look and it doesn't take a genius to deduce that Guy is MC Hammer's biggest fan.

Height: 5'10"
Weight: 159lbs

These mighty kicks alone will take you to the end of the game.

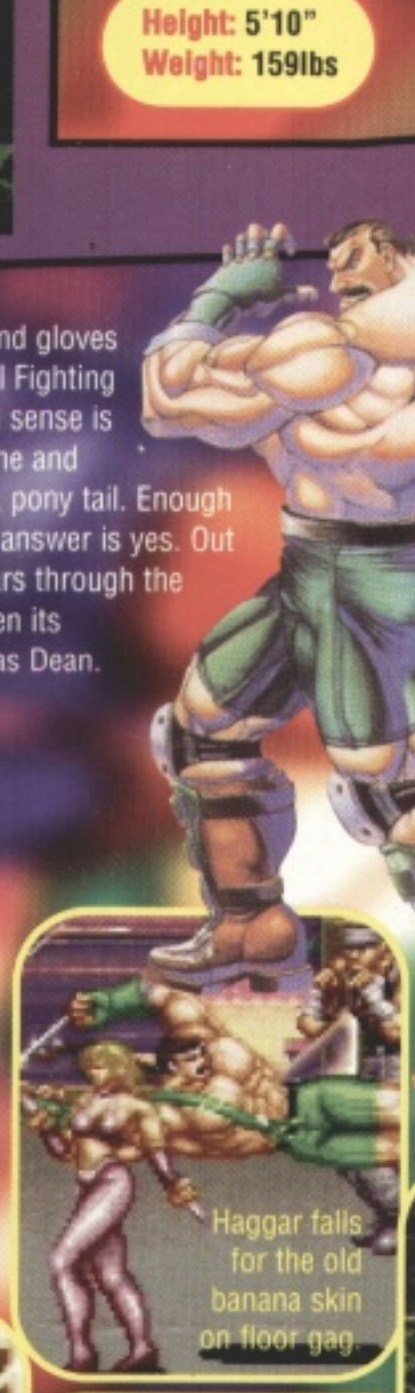


Get me down from here! God damned suction shoes!

There's no real need to finish him, but it's fun..

HAGGAR

Haggar's matching shorts and gloves are the envy of all his Final Fighting friends. This acute fashion sense is only marred by his 70s moustache and unpractical, given his profession, pony tail. Enough about togs, is he any good? The answer is yes. Out of the four characters Haggar tears through the game the quickest. However, given its simplicity you may want to play as Dean.



Height: 6'7"
Weight: 269lbs

As with all the characters, if you kick often enough you'll finish the game.

Again this is a side-scrolling beat-'em-up in the mould of the *Double Dragon* series. You know the drill... Generally head right, ruin a selection-box of baddies until a massive arrow appears (just like in real life) and generally head right again before meeting a lame boss. As with its predecessor you're occasionally faced with the treat of walking up-screen for a little while before, you guessed it, plodding right again. Good grief! Hardly ground-breaking, but the potential is at least there, has it been realised though? No.

This time around you have the choice of four characters (as opposed to last time's three), three of which are new. Yes, they're pulling out all the stops with the creation of three new sprites in three years! Haggar remains and is now joined by Lucia, Guy and Dean (see character boxes). The backdrops are actually quite impressive initially and the sprites are big, bold and bright, but after lengthy play a few other choice 'B' words spring to mind for both. Everything moves at a quick enough pace and you couldn't wish for a more responsive control system, but it's just too darned easy! *Final Fight Tough*? What rubbish, I finished the game in little over an hour and a half. *Final Fight Needless Cash-In And Unashamed Rip-Off Of Both Previous Games*, more like. And that's just in one-player mode! In co-operation mode Will and myself were close to nailing it in an hour before we had to box up all our gear and shift offices (don't these suits realise how important finishing a game is to us?). Not what I'd call value for money.

On the upside, each character does at least have a special move and super move (dependent on the Super meter), but these are merely throwaway gestures, much like the pleasing but ultimately needless jiggling of Lucia's breasts. A couple of nice touches do not a good game make (blimey, I'm beginning to talk like Yoda now!). But just *how* bad is it?

The answer is *very*. What happened to slapping in a difficulty curve? Even the bosses only take a few more hits to destroy than the rest of the chumps. And the backgrounds – yes, they are vaguely interactive in the sense that occasionally a glass smashes or a barrel explodes, but this is largely accidental and entirely detached from the gameplaying experience. If scenery is going to be anything other than a flat backdrop, give it a purpose for goodness' sakes. The whole experience is just shockingly dull!

So many things are wrong with this game! It's just so dated in every way. Not only has it not improved in its three year moulding – it's actually inferior to its 'arcade perfect' forerunners. Graphically, Capcom could have got away with it if they'd just spiced up the proceedings with something, anything unexpected (after all *Yoshi's Island* is graphically inferior to *DKC2*, but kicks its curvy butt in terms of sheer playability and originality). Sadly, they didn't bother – as if we wouldn't notice, so consider *Final Fight Tough* well and truly kicked.

● **Sean Atkins**

You appear to have found a graphical glitch, my friend.

Why are the baddies so curteous? You would have thought that instead of coming at you one at a time, they would all bundle in and ruin ya. Idiots!

Fame! I'm gonna live for-e-ever! I'm gonna learn how to fly – high!

Complete level one in under two minutes to reach the special Village People stage. Actually, that was a lie.

If you get bored you can always resort to the strategy of the playground push-fight where no-one ever gets hurt.

D E A N

Height: 6'6"
Weight: 214lbs

Honestly, the fish was this big!

Give me a cheeseburger Priscilla!

Now I come to think of it, it was THIS big!

Come 'ere my lad! I'll cuff your bloody ear for scrumping my apples I will.

A particularly poor dismount resulting in a belly-stanger.

Dean is the flashest of all the characters, but his lightening moves come at a cost – namely his energy bar evaporates at a frightening rate. His taste in Frankenstein boots give good support, but do make him more than a little flat-footed.

Come on – vogue... strike a pose, etc.

Watch my hair on the wire mesh!

LUCIA

Lucia isn't shy about the girth of her thighs, a rarity these days. She's the quickest of all the fighters, but alternative footwear would surely make her more manoeuvrable. Those tight shorts often give her hungry-bottom-syndrome.

Height: 5'8"
Weight: 115lbs

Again, keep her kicking to finish the game.

Sensibly keeping the sparkler at arms length.

Oh alright. Your chest IS bigger than mine!

FINAL FIGHT TOUGH

Capcom

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
45%	40%	70%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	49%
15%		

VERDICT: While the gameplay, although a tad simplistic, is varied enough to get you hooked, the challenge is a travesty. Many household pets could take up the rather pathetic gauntlet of finishing this game and succeed admirably. Capcom have become sloppy in their old age and need a good slap.

PANEL DE PON

Casual flickers-through beware. This ain't no ordinary puzzle game. In fact, it's extraordinary. Here's why, comely chums...

Here's a match between the dragon boss and a rare blue-haired fairy. She's not very good though.

It would be sickeningly easy to discard yet another coloured block-stuffed puzzle game to the *Puyo Puyo*-u-likes (and don't-u-likes) cabinet in the *Super Play* office. But to treat *Panel De Pon* so roughly would be… well, it would just be wrong. It's one of the most panic-inducing puzzle-em-ups you're likely to sit through. And one which we have to recommend.

Having already seen the screenshots, you may have assumed the plot: rotate groups of falling blocks so that lines of similar colours are eliminated. But take another look – no plummeting blocks.

Though the object remains accessibly familiar – lining up three or more blocks of the same colour to get rid of them – the implementation is refreshingly different. The whole field is on a continuous upwards journey, and you set about reducing that field using a two block-wide cursor. Any of the pad buttons will allow you to move a block from one side of this to the other, so you can move single blocks to fill an adjacent gap or simply switch the positions of two neighbouring ones. The shoulder buttons are reserved for manually speeding up the field's upwards trek (useful when you're working with a few blocks at the bottom of the screen). And it responds to your touches like a dream.

It sounds deceptively easy, and like a thousand games in this vein, you'll have mastered the basics within a couple of brief attempts. But once the gameplay gets under your skin you'll be itching for 'just *one* more go'.

One of its many charms is the way the single-player game does its darnedest to match the frenetic nature of a head-to-head match. There are a whole host of options to keep you occupied. You can opt for a two

Watch as the computer impresses you with its cunning and skill. Wonder which blocks it'll move?

FAIRY 'NUFF

Yoshi: comin' for the UK.

Nintendo are certainly rather partial to plying us with fairy juice in their games, and *Panel De Pon* is drunk with the stuff. But to be honest, the little winged devils don't occupy quite the same niche in the west. So, for its UK release, it'll be getting a bit of a face-lift. Despite rumours to the contrary, it won't be turned into a *Killer Instinct* puzzler, but will be crammed with little Yoshi characters and renamed *Yoshi's Attack*. Top stuff.

PANEL DE PON
Nintendo

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	79%	93%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	90%
90%		

VERDICT: Brimming with options, heady with playability and steeped in challenge, this'll turn minutes into hours, hours into days. Addictive stuff.

HAVE SOME OF THAT!

As with the majority of these *Tetris*-like puzzlers, the game really kicks into life when you're playing against someone else. The 'best of three' two minute time attack mode will find you trying to trying to use tactics to build up your score. But during the VS mode, all attempts at strategic play go out the window. Blocks of three, four and more get whizzed across to the opposition, in the form of smiling bars. To turn these into usable blocks, you must complete a row that touches them.

Choose this option and you'll have to get rid of the blocks using a set number of moves (indicated by out clocky friend to the right).

minute timed challenge, where the emphasis is on getting a high score, or have a lash at the stage clearing option. You can even take on the computer in a two-player style 'VS' mode, which comes furnished with both adventuring elements and challenging bosses.

But it's the two-player matches that will have your heart drubbing like a drum. Put off the normal two minute challenge, and go for the far less leisurely VS mode. Here you'll be able to transfer blocks to your opponent in great solid heaps. It can get painfully tense, and was responsible for the weary countenances of the team this month. That's the trouble with such absorbing games – they're just so damn draining.

● **Marcus Hawkins**

A blinking view will greet you if you allow the blocks to reach the top. Wood fairies, eh? Tsch.

Japanese Release

Game: Panel De Pon
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: In-house
Price: Check with importer
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 2
Cart ROM: 8 Mbits

OPTIONED RIGHT UP

Not only can you select the style of game you want to play, but you can go on to pick the fairy you want to play and alter the difficulty setting of the game. Obviously the blocks move faster as your points build up, but the opening speed you choose is crucial. We opted for a pace of about 16 to kick off and were surprised how fast this actually turned out to be. 99 as the speed setting proved nigh on unplayable, with a game lasting an average of about 10 seconds. There's no point even trying to formulate a plan at this level – just rely on instincts.

SNES TECH & GAMING ANSWERS

GAMEFREAK

By Tony Mott

Don't be put off by his slightly outré trews and funny little shoes with bells on, the Gamefreak really *is* all-knowing, except when it comes to fashionable attire...

From Scott Munro, Inverness, Scotland:

Q You've said that *FFIII* will not run on a UK machine – even with an Action Replay Mk3 – without 'glitches'. Do you mean glitches as in screen flickering, and, if so, are they really that bad as to put you off the game?

A No, I mean glitches like not being able to read menu screens properly and not seeing the game's full ending. If those things don't 'put you off the game', then go for it. And that's the very last *FFIII*/UK SNES conundrum I entertain in this column.

Q Does *Final Fantasy II* run properly with an Action Replay Mk3? And, if so, do you think it's worth purchasing in import at £60+? (I absolutely luuurve RPGs!)

A *FFII* will run perfectly on lesser adaptors than the AR Mk3. You should be able to get it for less than £60 if you hunt around enough, and, yes, it's a must-have RPG.

Q Apart from *Super Mario RPG*, is *Yoshi's Island* the last Mario game on the SNES? (I think Yoshi's Island was way too easy as I completed it in three days!)

A I've heard there's at least one more unannounced Mario title in the works for the SNES, and it should be out before the end of the year in Japan.

Q If *Starfox 2* is supposed to be getting a UK release this year, how come you haven't shown any screenshots?

A It's not supposed to be coming out this year, as it happens. My source at Argonaut has told me that the project's on hold, perhaps to be resurrected at a later date, perhaps not.

Q Over the past few months there has been much talk in your mag about 50-60Hz conversions. Do you think it would be technically impossible for Datel to release, say, an Action Replay Mk4 with this 50-60Hz conversion included?

A Well, if not technically impossible as such, certainly practically impossible.

From David Fransisco Aranda Teixeira, Mexico City:

Q I am going to buy a Nintendo 64, but I am moving from an NTSC country to a PAL country. Do you think I should buy the PAL one or the imported NTSC model?

A The true gamefreak always buys imported NTSC. Are you one? Question answered.

Q I am thinking of taking my NTSC SNES there – what do I need in order to make it function?

A As long as you have a TV with a SCART socket you won't need anything.

Q And what about my Virtual Boy, which I'll also be taking? Do I just need a voltage adaptor, or do I need more things? (Bear in mind that I have an AC adaptor.)

A You just need a suitable voltage adaptor.

Q I have *Mario's Dream Tennis* for the Virtual Boy. Which other games would you recommend?

A A bit of a toughie, this, as I don't get to play as many Veebee games as I'd like. Apart from the blaster *Vertical Force*, which isn't bad, I'd say have a look at *Wario Land*.

Q When I buy the N64 I want to get a game with it. Which would you recommend out of *Super Mario Kart R* and *PilotWings 64*?

A I couldn't tell you, as I've not seen the finished games, but from a personal point of view, I'm looking forward to the *Mario Kart* update more.

From D. P. Heard, West Sussex:

Q When I got *Donkey Kong Country* I had a video with it, and, in it, it was said that you can get a music CD from the game. I'd like to know if there's anywhere I can get this CD from, as I love the music from the game.

A It's not available separately, so I'd suggest putting a free ad in Supermarket.

From David Harrison, Crookes, Sheffield:

Q I've several different adaptors promising owners of UK SNESes the chance to play US and Japanese games. Do any of these offer 100% compatibility (e.g. are they capable of running the end sequence of *Final Fantasy III*?), and what are the access codes mentioned in the ads for Datel's Programmable Adaptor?

A No, you'll not find one that offers 100% compatibility. Access codes are those which allow you to bypass the country-code protection which softcos build into US and

DAYDREAMING

Welcome to the bit where you get the chance to win stuff by being creative. Chris Johnson of Middlesex is our first contestant:

"I dream of a game of awesome power, jaw-dropping graphics, stunning sound, of everlasting playability which could only be handled by the N64 and 64DD. First of all, you would build a town – or possibly a whole country – *Sim City*-style. Then you would enter the place and play in it, *Doom*-style. You could then either receive missions (like in *Alien 3*) or just go around vandalising things,

Would the eradication of end-of-level bosses, like this one from *Cybernator*, rid games of monotony?

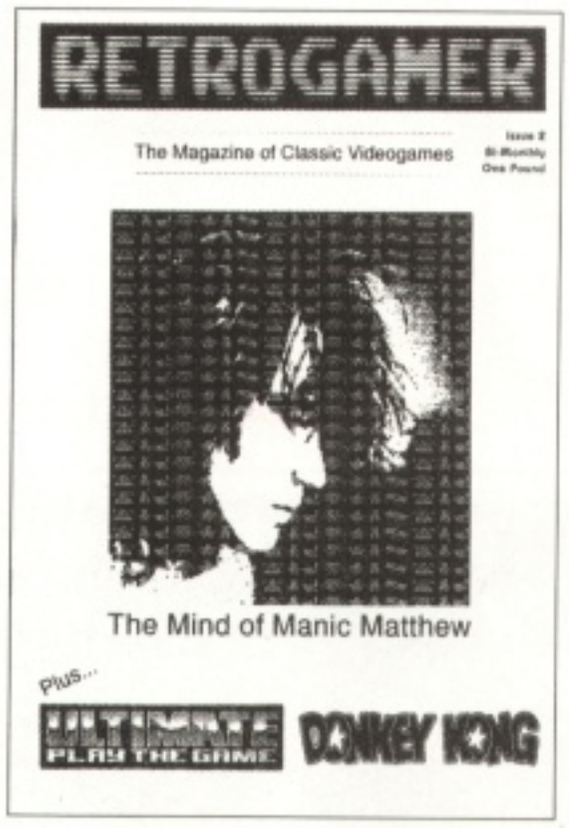
Japanese carts to stop you playing them in the UK.

From Robert Andall, Ealing, London:
Q Are there going to be ANY decent ARPGs from Square Soft, or indeed from any company, coming out in the near future?
A None of Square's further SNES games are ARPGs, so your only hope is for *Tenchi Souzou* to be translated by NOA. It'll be called Genesis if it happens, and it'll be fabbage.
Q Will there be any *Mana*-type games for the Ultra 64?
A None have been announced yet, and any won't appear until after the 64DD comes out.
Q Exactly what is the 64DD and what does it do? Does it act a bit like a computer's hard drive?
A You haven't been reading *Super Play* intently enough, have you? Just imagine the 64DD as a CD drive using magnetic technology rather than optical, with a lower storage capacity and the ability to allow data to be stored on it as well as retrieved from it.
Q Do you have any idea what it's going to cost?
A Nintendo themselves don't even know yet, but their (deep breath) sales and marketing executive vice president, Peter Main, has said, "although the manufacturer's suggested retail price is not yet set, we are intent on positioning it as a system expansion; in other words, significantly less expensive than the unit on which it plays." I reckon if the N64 launches in the UK at 200 notes, the 64DD will follow at around 100 to 150.

From Andrew 'Obscure Questions A Speciality' Crane, Bournemouth:
Q What are your favourite fanzines? (I'm planning to buy some...)
A Journey's End and Role Call are pretty good RPG 'zines, and I've got a soft spot for Retrogamer and Digital Press. And, although I could call some of its content into question, I've got a lot of time for Red Leopard, which is a triumphant effort.

Retrogamer gets the GF thumbs-up.

Q If you could have any three coin-ops in your home, what would they be?
A Um... *Street Fighter Zero 2*, *Juno First* and maybe *Black Knight 2000*. But ask me again in a month's time and the list would be different.
Q Who exactly are HAL Laboratory?
A I don't know too much about them other than they produced *Revenge Of The Gator* on the Game Boy and, of course, the Kirby series, and that they have a close relationship with Ninty.



From James Francis, North Devon:
Q The N64 controller already looks heavy enough as it is. Is it likely that the addition of the memory card will make it too heavy and uncomfortable to use?
A Yes, if you've got forearms like matchsticks. Otherwise, no.
Q Are there any plans for a sequel to that smart racer, *Rock 'n' Racing*, on the SNES or N64?
A There's a sequel coming soon, but not to a Nintendo format. From what I've seen it looks a bit nob anyway, so don't go blubbing into your beer.
Q Have you heard of any add-ons that will be available for the N64 (apart from the ones you've already revealed), such as a light gun or multitap?
A Well, I've just read in style 'bible' The Face that the standard N64 joypad "will work as a light gun, baseball bat, steering wheel, even a conventional joypad", so it looks like you won't have to buy any extra add-ons anyway (guffaw). As for a multitap, what, four ports really aren't enough for you?
Q When can we expect to see some form of TV advertising for the N64?
A On the run up to Christmas, I suppose.
Q What's your all-time favourite Konami game?
A It's a tie between the original *Mystical Ninja* and *Juno First*.
Q Are *Worms* or *Cannon Fodder 2* coming out on the SNES? If so, when?
A *Cannon Fodder 2*'s not being converted but Worms should be out in late spring some time.
Q Can I have a biscuit?
A Not if you don't say please.

From Paul R. Latham, Frome, Somerset:
Q If the 64DD unit uses discs which are writable and are cheaper to manufacture than cartridges, have a greater memory capacity and a quick access time, then why bother with cartridges? I understand carts bring more income for Nintendo and future carts will be able to hold new chips, but if the N64 is the state-of-the-art system it's said to be it shouldn't rely on these. Many game companies will most likely opt for the 64DD discs over cartridges as it will be cheaper for them.
A For starters the 64DD won't be available until at least nine months after the N64 comes out. And... well... um, that's the only reason I can think of, actually. Your point about carts generating more income is probably a very significant one, though.
Q When will we see more coverage of N64 games before the machine's release? Are there any more Shoshinkai-type shows coming up?
A Nintendo will dominate E3 in May with the N64, and there'll be a stack of new games unveiled then, including things like *Cruis'n USA* and *Killer Instinct Special* (or whatever they end up being called). And as with Shoshinkai, *Super Play* will have the best report. Naturally.
Q Why put N64 teaser ads out now if it doesn't get an April release?
A So that marketing people have something to do at a time when traditionally there's little money being spent on games and game consoles.
Q Is it likely that the N64 will not have any sprite-based games? (As all shown at the moment are rendered.)
A As I've said here before, Nintendo are encouraging only 3D titles, but I wouldn't be surprised to see maybe an N64 conversion or two of successful 2D games in the future.

maiming small animals (if you're sick) or even help little old ladies to cross the road."

Thank you, Chris. Five points. Let's see what our antipodean cousin Peter Brodie of Sydney can score on the old Daydream-o-meter:

"I'd really like to see a platformer or shooter WITHOUT mid- and end-of-level bosses. There's nothing more irritating than becoming engrossed in the 'reality' of a good game that is making you work against hard oppo only to have it come to a screeching halt while you suss out the attack pattern of some sad pre-programmed sprite. This immediately makes you aware that you are, after all, only playing a collection of coloured reference points, and not saving the world (or whatever), and, by the time you've sussed the boss and dealt it the fatal one, you have to go through the whole idiotic process again with the end-of-level boss. Do this a number of times with varying backgrounds and sprites and that's yer game. Is it any wonder people are getting sick of platformers and shooters? Why not a game where you keeping meeting harder oppo as the game progresses, with save points scattered strategically along the way so you don't have to go over old ground and can stop whenever you like, accrue power-ups and the like intact?"

Hmm. I'm not sure that this is a valid reason as to why people are getting sick of platformers and shooters, but this is a true gamefreak's daydream and racks up six points. Now, Paul Harrison of Tyne And Wear, come on down:

"I would like to see a Cluedo-type game for the N64, but instead of plodding around a board, it would be an RPG where you could be one of the residents in the mansion or the murderer. As a resident you'd have to solve the mystery; as the murderer your aim would be to kill anyone who knows who you are and to steal enough money to buy a plane ticket to Brazil. There would be fully interactive surroundings and you could use anything as a weapon. You could cut telephone wires, spy through keyholes and hide out in the cellar or attic. You could talk to other characters – controlled by the CPU or other human players – to gain information about the killer, etc."

ZZZTFP! Damn, you've knacked me Daydream-o-meter. Which makes you the winner this month – have some cartage for an imaginative effort.

NEED ADVICE?

Don't suffer in silence. Our resident troubleshooter is here to answer all your queries:

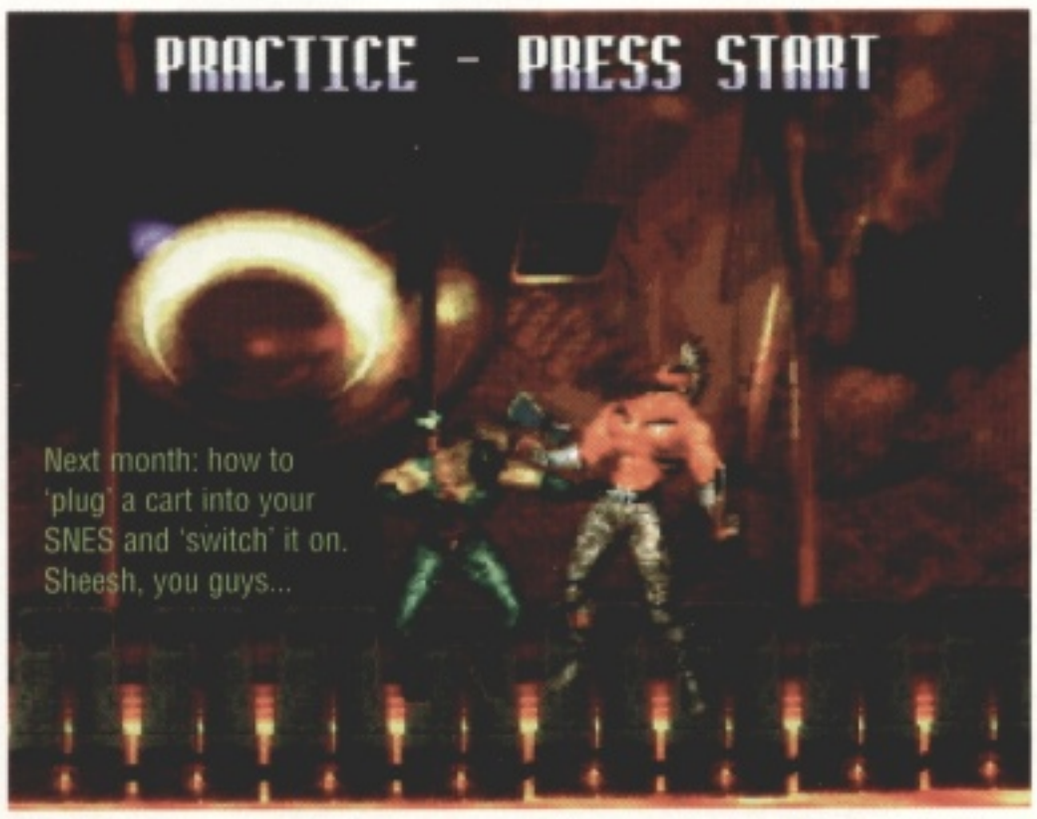
Gamefreak, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

MODE 7

By ZY NICHOLSON

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME-FREAKS!

What with our rather special extended FF Forum AND a Yoshi's Island secret level guide thrown in for good measure, my humble column is fair packed to the brim this month. Rather than strain your eyes by printing it all in 6 point type, I've decided to hold over a few spacious items until next issue. Fear not – we'll be back to our usual devious, conniving, underhand ways before you know it. To make next month's Mode 7 an orgy of virtual immorality, you should write your cheats or game queries in a recognised Terran alphabet (though my Pictish is sketchy) and send them to Mode 7, *Super Play*, Future Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW or email: splay@futurenet.co.uk



Next month: how to 'plug' a cart into your SNES and 'switch' it on. Sheesh, you guys...

KILLER INSTINCT

(Rare/Nintendo)
***SP*36: 85%**

I refused to include this before, but would you believe it? A rival mag prints how to change the dummy in Practice Mode and I am again inundated with letters from profiteering contributors (mostly addressed to Allan Brett), all of whom expected free carts and big cash prizes for their pathetic offerings. Look, this ranks right down there with hitting SELECT to call up your options before a match starts. IT IS NOT A CHEAT. Savvy? Sigh...

Start a 1-player game with pad 2 and play as the character you want to beat up. Press START on pad 1 to return immediately to the menu. Now go to the Practice game on pad 1 and – JUMPING JEHOSEPHAT! – you can pummel something other than UltraTech's pony-tailed dustbin. Now please stop writing in.

Y'know, I always suspected that *KI* was geared more for one player than versus matches. Now I know.

SUPER BOMBERMAN 3

(Hudson Soft)
***SP*37: 89%**

● **Secret level AR codes**

Although this rightly belongs in the codes section, I'm printing it as a cheat to make a point on Mr Compton's behalf. If you have an Action Replay device, enter the following to determine which stage you play in Battle Mode:

7E6C 6Exx where xx is the stage number in hexadecimal

The interesting thing, as our contributor Neil Bailey of Essex points out, is that if you fill the xx space with a value of either 0B or 0C, you'll get one of two secret battle stages. So they do indeed exist, as Compton suggested. Ergo, a pad cheat or password to enable these stages must also reside within Hudson Soft's eloquent coding. Surely, for surely, somebody out there can tell us how to get to them without AR assistance?

MEGA MAN 7

(Capcom)
***SP*38: 79%**

● **Battle Mode**

Not just a bonus level, but a whole sub-game: that's what's hidden in your *MM7* cart. Fancy a two player beat-'em-up in true Capcom style, with fireballs and special moves and the works? Enter your password as

1415
5585
7823
6251

Then hold the L and R collar buttons and press START for a secret battle game. I haven't been able to test this (although I have seen it in action) and thus I can't tell you any of the moves for Mega Man or his opponent. Perhaps somebody out there will oblige me on this count? At the very least, we should doff our fashionable felt hats in respect for Omar Hijab of County Durham, who provided this useful bit of bonus-game-passwordage.

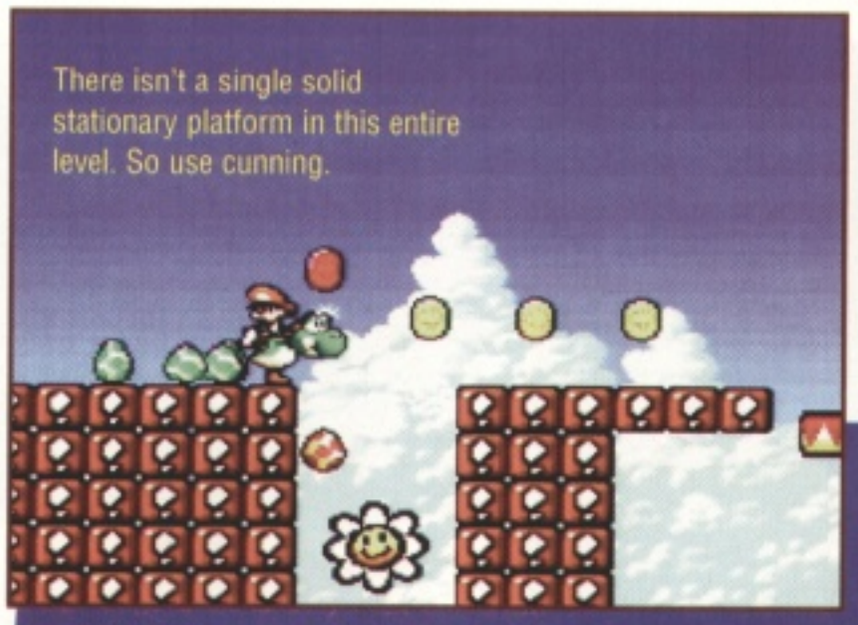
YOSHI'S ISLAND

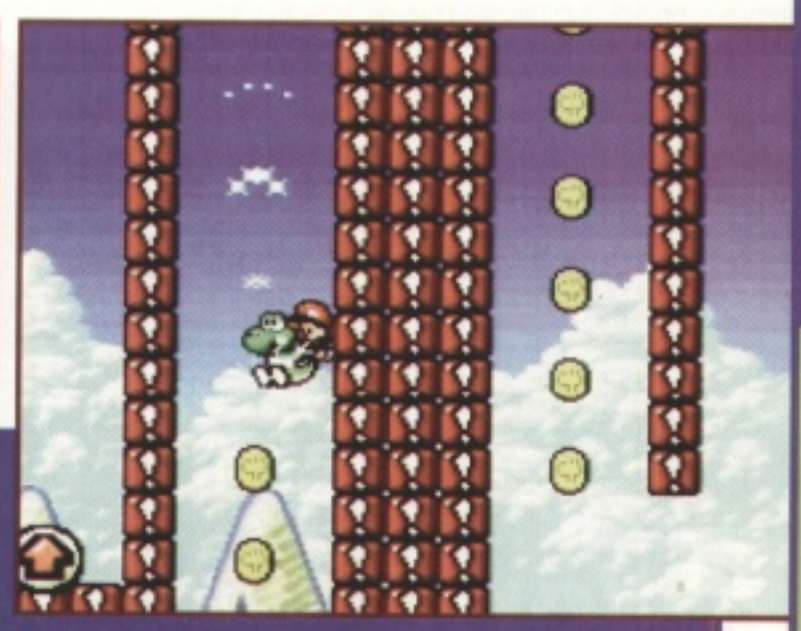
(Nintendo)

*SP*36: 94%

● **Secret Levels**

As we mentioned in last month's playing guide, six secret levels exist. Score 100% on every stage within a world and it will be declared 'Perfect', letting you open those two mystery boxes on the menu. Here comes the real challenge...





Sorry, but Poochie IS stupid. Make sure you don't miss the coins under the rotating spiky ball.

World 1

There's only one real problem on this level: you have been partnered with an imbecile, and your fragile life rests in its clumsy lava-proof paws.

One thing to watch out for is that your idiot canine chum will happily run off the edge of the screen. Yoshi is bounded by the limits of forced scrolling, however, and will be scraped into the lava by such antics. Fortunately, pressing left... and... right... and... left... et cetera will keep your steed totally bewildered and thus stationary until you spot your moment to dash on a little. Keep wolfing down those yummy bats and shoot anything you can't grab in person. There are no secrets here.

Bonus Game: Kamek Shoot

This is a great place to pick up items once you've perfected World 1. Fold immediately after hitting anything vaguely decent and repeat at leisure.

World 2

Ignore those arrows and head LEFT at the very start of this level to see a sneakily secret pipe, below which you'll find a couple of useful eggs and enough starry men to max out your timer.

It is possible, I'm sure, for a sterling gamer to score 100% here in one precise and faultless execution of manoeuvres. I, however, prefer to cheat. Here's how.

Hit the first red switch, take the platform and jump to the second switch, catching the platform again on its return and collecting the coins until you must jump off and glide to the first big Bounce Arrow. Jump up, hit the switch high on the left, collect all the coins here and shoot the flower. Now double back and jump LEFT off these high red !-blocks before they disappear. Keep gliding left by holding jump

There's no chance to use a +20, so...

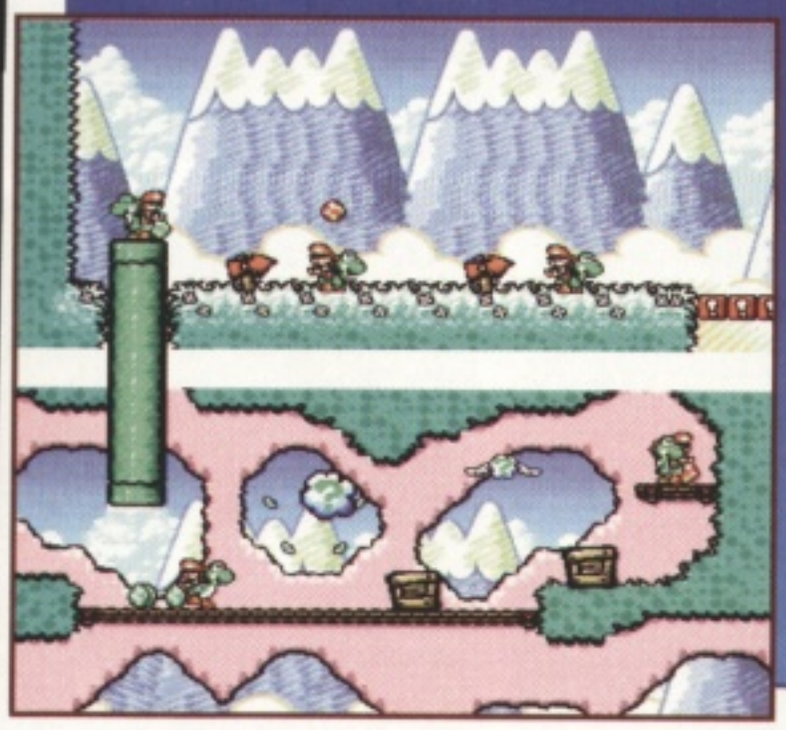
This is the worst: jumping off the lift at the bottom before it falls.

until Yoshi stops flapping and then pressing and holding it again. The screen will go through some uncomfortable scrolling backwards but you will, in time, find yourself back at the start of the level with the very first red switch reset and ready to rock. Now start again from the top, except this time you can concentrate on getting to that fourth switch without diversions.

The final moving platform is tricky – you'll probably make it with seconds to spare, but you want to wait until the red !-blocks are just about to disappear before you jump on and trigger it. Otherwise you'll be swept off. Sobbing.

Bonus Game: Scratch Card

I adore the attention to detail (the glove scratches each square with a different technique) but I've never got three Marios. Ever. Just as well I don't do the lottery, eh?



World 3

There are four Red Shyguys to catch before they disappear: one at the start, one just after Flower no.4 (blink and you'll miss him), and two beside the Goal Ring. You should also pound a Red Coin from the second wooden post at the start of the level.

Look for a shortcut by jumping up and off the top of the screen by the first flower: you'll be transported to a treetop hoard of starry men. If the monkeys get too much then POW block them without mercy.

Oh, and just before you jump through that hoop – the last flower is BEYOND the Goal Ring and you need an egg or melon seed to shoot it.

Bonus Game: Open The Box

Unlike similar games within levels, the number of Kameks has been reduced from three to one. An 83.33% chance of a decent gift.

Amid pretty flowers hide many dangers. Don't be deceived by the idyllic nature of the scene.

Escape route part (i): ouch.

World 4

The 'concept' of this lengthy stage is that there are three sewer hole doors which can only be reached if you push three corresponding crates underneath them. The route to the exit goes something like this.

(i) Head down and left to the bottom of the 'illuminated' side of this stage, taking a door marked by two red egg blocks. Proceed through the 'dark' side until you come out beside a crate. Push this down to the bottom of the level and right. It lets you reach ledges leading up to a room with flippers.

(ii) Mole Morph section. Collect coins and continue.

(iii) Push the next crate down and then down-left and place it under the hole to the left of the flipper room to gain access.

(iv) Copter Morph Section. When you leave the area you'll find two flashing eggs – nip back briefly and shoot the resetting Piranha Plant with them (twice) to make sure of grabbing the coins they contain.

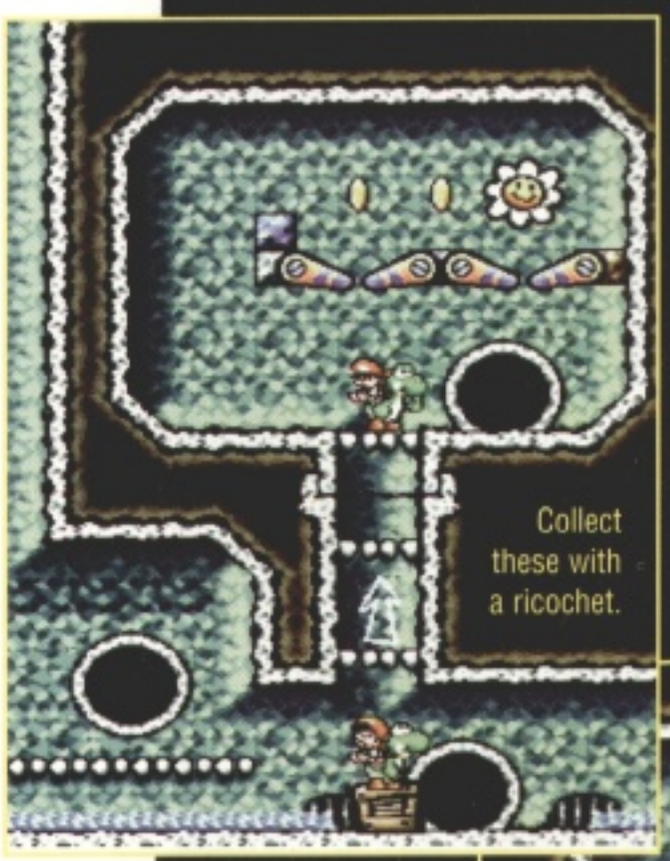
(v) You have to stay with the third box to keep it on screen as it floats downstream. It comes to rest near the exit hole, which is marked by a halo of arrows.

20/4 before exit hole

Still missing some Red Coins? Thought so. After the Mole Morph, drop down and then RIGHT (ignoring the arrow) to discover a chamber with the remaining stash. A cache of starry men is sneakily hidden in one of the crates you need to stand on.

Bonus Game: Pairs

If you want to fill your inventory with particular items (just Green Watermelons and +20 Stars, for instance) then look no further. It's easy to remember the placement of just a couple of items and then deliberately fold. Match all the pairs and the last item will become a 10-Up.


Collect these with a ricochet.

Right: the exit (in case you hadn't guessed). Expect to do this level twice to collect everything.

World 5

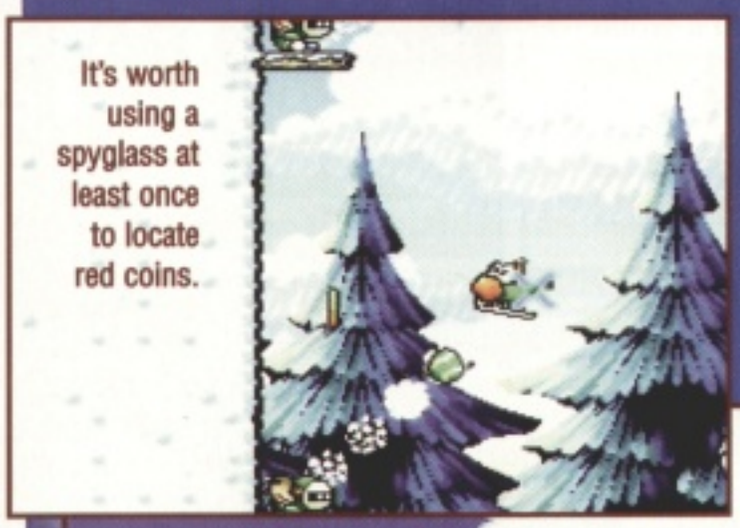
Have you read our 1-Up loop cheats in issues SP40/41? Because you are going to curse, and swear aloud, and perhaps even weep like a babby, before you collect all 100% on this level.

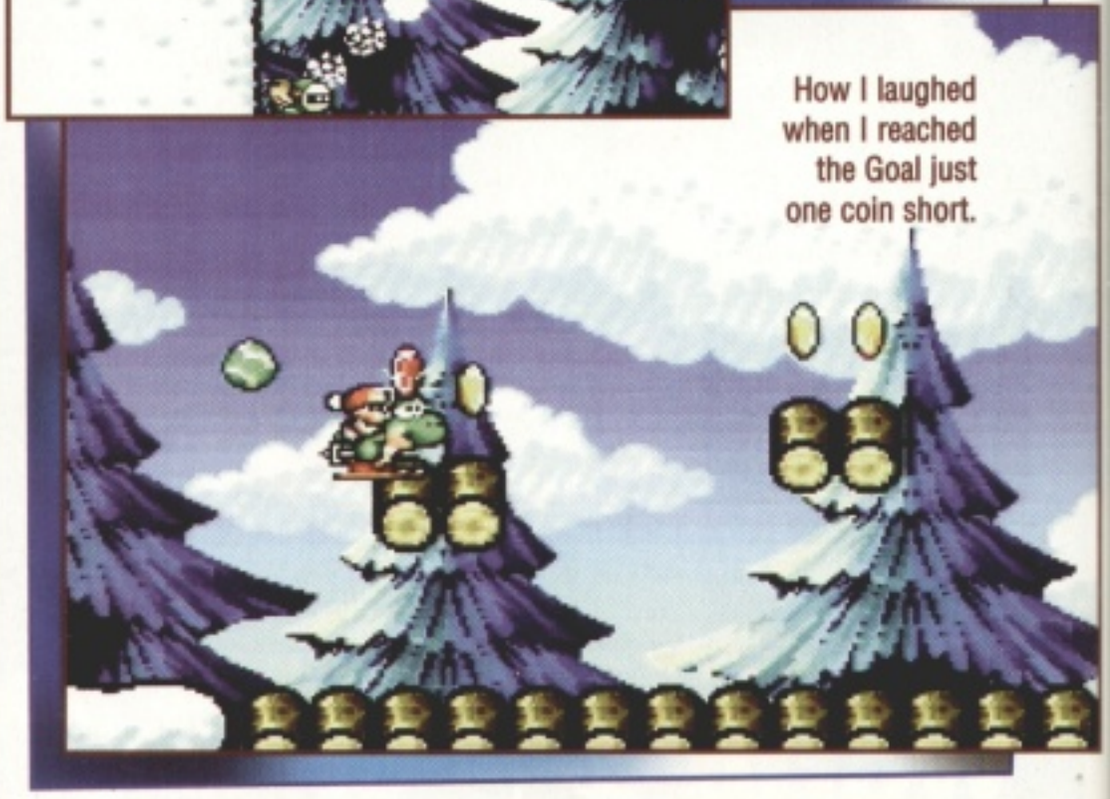
5/1 Middle Ring

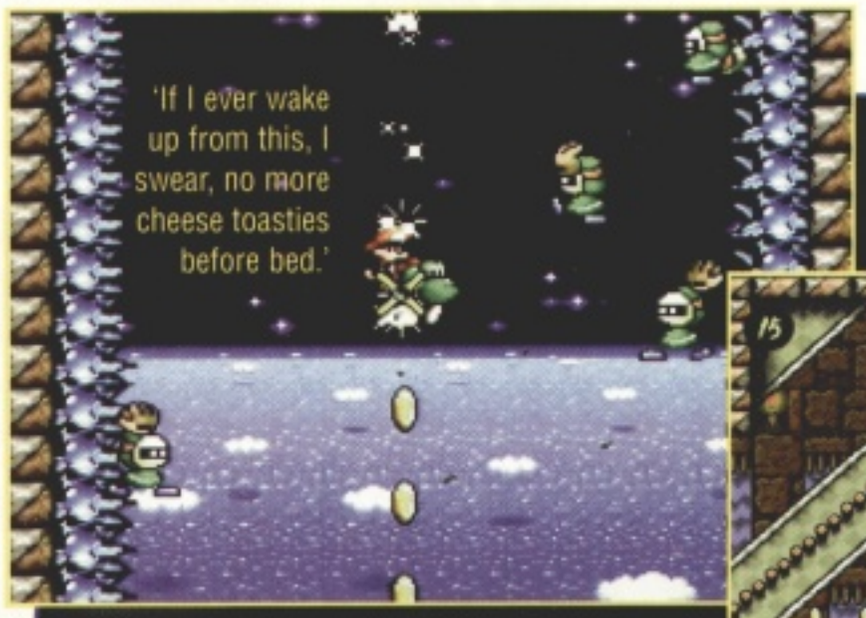
Before you jump through that middle ring, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE KEY FROM THE PREVIOUS SECTION. The only way to perfect the next two sections is to do them over and over with your eyes peeled, learning when and where to jump or fly. I'm sorry, but I can help you no more.

Bonus Game: Roulette

That zero multiplier isn't friendly, but if you know the 1-Up loops then large wagers are mandatory.


It's worth using a spyglass at least once to locate red coins.


How I laughed when I reached the Goal just one coin short.


'If I ever wake up from this, I swear, no more cheese toasties before bed.'

Below: what's er, below.

section, just drop back into the water to find hidden transport.

Bonus Game: Slot Machine

It's trivial, but you can move the glove with the D-Pad to decide where to start.

Sic Transit Gloria Yoshi

And if you perfect all six extra bits, what happens? Apart from some starry men on the titles above the rotating island map, it would seem the accomplishment is intended as its own reward (we haven't found any hyper-special end sequence, basically). So if you know something we don't, please write in and look smarter than us. Knowledge before pride, that's our motto.

World 6

The easiest of the secret worlds shouldn't present a problem by now – it holds no major secrets, and as long as you check underneath both sides of the third rolling barrel bridge (flapping upwards at the last second) you'll get your 100% without difficulty.

13/2 Middle Ring 1

Grab a Green Watermelon from the inventory and 'Yossy' can practically stroll through those blue spikes bordering the giant letters of his name. Avoid being knocked off the high-rise lift by constantly licking (and thus catching) any eggs thrown at you.

15/3 Middle Ring 2

One minor point of interest is that when you first find yourself plummeting to the ground with fielders and spikes on all sides, pull DOWN to initiate your slam and you'll outrace them. If you miss any coins on the last

'I think they're expecting us.'

FINAL FANTASY FORUM

Fourteen months on, with every character profiled, it seems the time has come to reveal all. We'll be covering newer games in more depth now, so keep those letters coming.

Unfortunately it's almost certain that one of the finest Super Nintendo games ever, *Final Fantasy III*, will not receive a UK release. We know that many of you have played the US translation on import but, because of its unorthodox coding, *FFIII*'s end sequence simply won't work on any 50Hz machine regardless of the adaptor you use.
With these two facts in mind, we saw no possible objection to our unveiling of *FFIII*'s conclusion. If you have an adaptor that lets you hear the music, albeit without a screen, we suggest you load up that last save point, plug in the stereo and initiate the sequence before reading through the following spread and discovering what transpires. But first...

Suits You, Sir

Ready for the final assault on Kefka's Tower? Are you sure you're dressed for the part? You might have discovered your own preferences, but the label to be seen in this season is definitely Genji. Take your loyalty card to the Colosseum and look for these offers.

The Super Play "Gear!" Table
Genji Glove ➜ Thunder Shield ➜ Genji Shield
Tabby Suit ➜ Chocobo Suit ➜ Moogle Suit ➜ Nutkin Suit ➜ Genji Armour
Red Cap ➜ Coronet ➜ Regal Crown ➜ Genji Helmet
Imp Halberd ➜ Cat Hood ➜ Merit Award ➜ Rename Card ➜ Marvel Shoes
Sniper ➜ Bone Club ➜ Red Jacket
Crystal Mail ➜ Ice Shield ➜ Flame Shield

- You can steal Chocobo and Moogle Suits from the creatures in Owzer's House, Thunder Shields from Steroidites, and Genji Gloves from the common Dragons on the Floating Continent (or use Ragnarok to Metamorph Samurai & Retainers).
- Marvel Shoes combine low-level protective and regenerative spells in one Relic, constantly active throughout battle, making them ideal for the weaker members of your party or for Colosseum fighters.
- Aegis Shield – General Leo's armour of choice. You will have found one in Mt. Zozo, but a second exists in Kefka's Tower: when you open a chest containing a Hero Ring, search the wall below for a long and winding secret passage.
- We've mentioned this already, but the Cursed Shield can be upgraded to the incredible Paladin Shield by equipping it for 255 fights. Once you have Locke in the WoR, you should look for its owner in Narshe. Use a Ribbon to counteract its worst effects.
- The monster-in-a-box below Umaro's cave holds Minerva, but you can use Locke to steal more Minerva armour from the Master Pugs.
- Four Flame Shields and a Merton spell (or two, if you have Gem Box and Economizer equipped. Heh heh heh).

PROFILES

TERRA

***Final Fantasy III* is the story of three hybrids, humans imbued with magical powers. One is driven insane by the power. One learns independence from her creators. The third, and most important, discovers her identity in the needs of others. Er... Critical theories, anyone? Anyone?**

It might seem at first that Terra's Morph skill is best used sparingly: understandable, but erroneous. In Esper form Terra receives impressive modifiers and multipliers, and with constant use of the Morph you'll gradually increase both its frequency and duration. Judicious use of the X button during battles can help you take advantage of its briefer phases early in the game.

But why change her name from Tina to Terra for the US version? According to a Seattle correspondent, Squaresoft's American HQ sits directly opposite the offices of a company called Terra Communications. Maybe Ted was gazing out of the window one day, and..?

Finally...

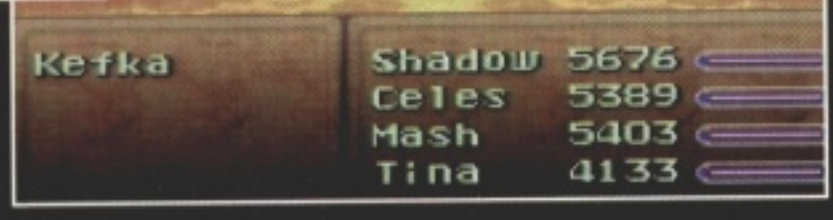
Thanks this month go to Craig McBride of Stevenage, James of Solihull and Peter Deakin (another Demon Acolyte speaking across the electronic ether). Conversely, Davy Stephen's Merit Award/Moogle Suit trick doesn't actually work, does it? The scoundrel. He won't be so smug when the Light of Judgement smites his back yard.

Gabbiani's Casino Aeriale is currently taking bookings. Details of your stake limit (and tips or questions about any Square game you care to mention) will be handled confidentially and should be sent to:

Final Fantasy Forum, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Now turn over for FFIII's incredible end sequence... ➜

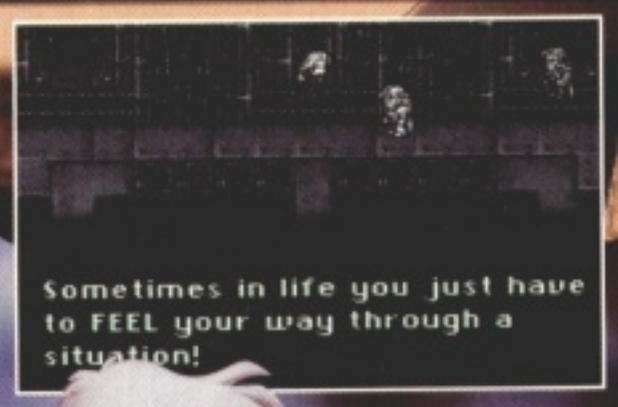
Upon entering Kefka's Tower for the first time, the question is raised: what will happen to Terra if all magical powers – and Espers – cease to exist with the destruction of the Statues? The answer is revealed, but first the characters must take a bow...



Setzer Gabbiani

Motif: Aces tumble down the screen

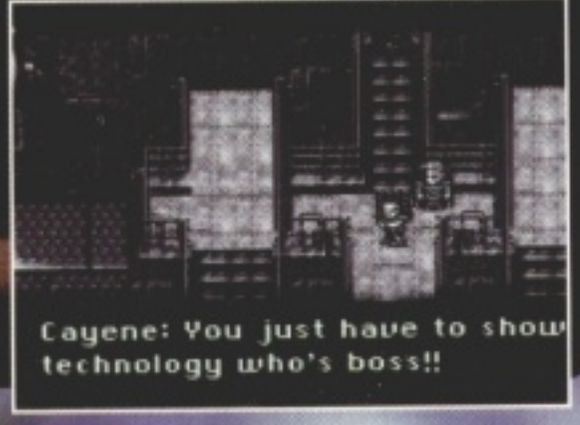
Presented with a choice of two paths, Setzer flips a coin that suggests left. But on a sudden hunch he changes his mind and swiftly intervenes to stop Edgar and Celes heading that way. The gambler's instinct is shown worthy when an explosion rips through the door they were about to open. "Daryl, I'm beginning to sound like you..."

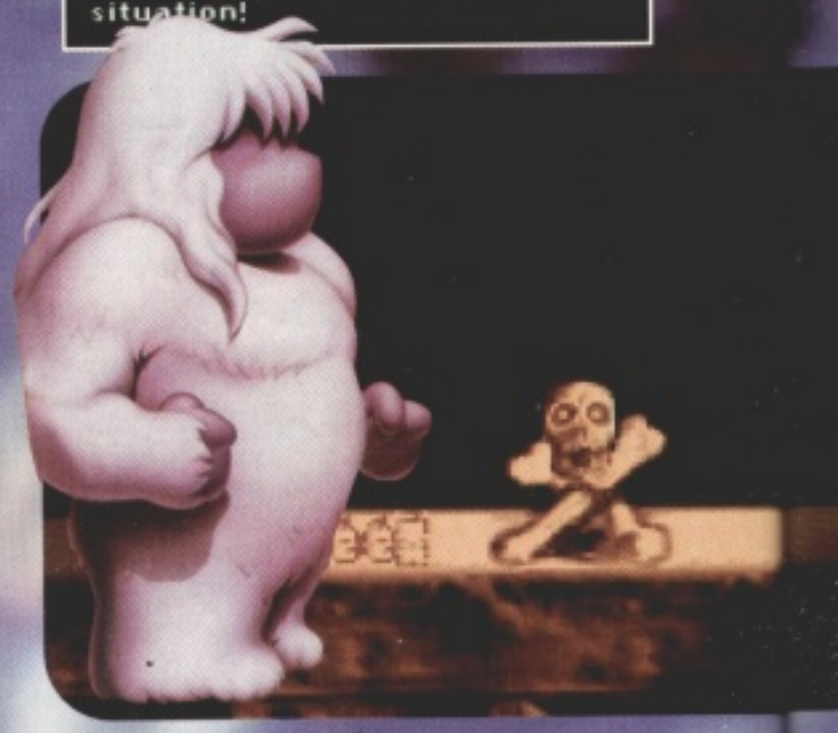


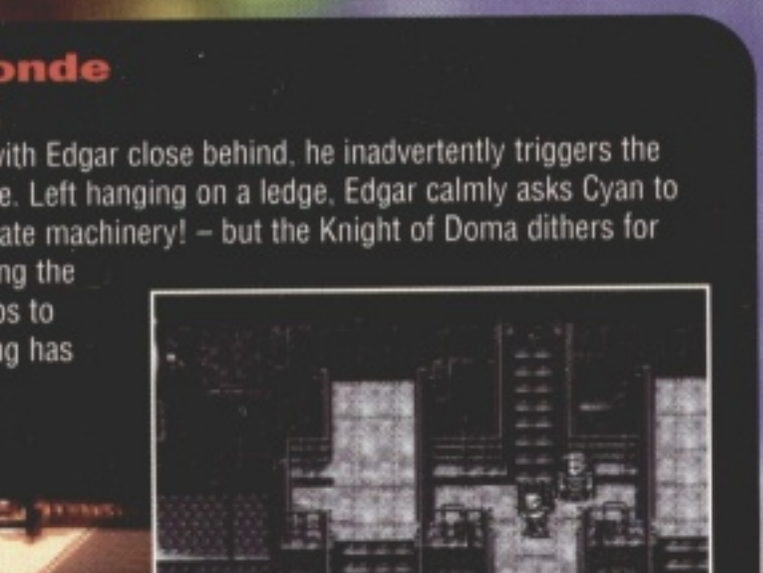
Cyan Garamonde

Motif: a sparkling katana

When Cyan exits a door with Edgar close behind, he inadvertently triggers the removal of a vital staircase. Left hanging on a ledge, Edgar calmly asks Cyan to do the unthinkable – operate machinery! – but the Knight of Doma dithers for only a second before hitting the switch that sends the steps to Edgar's rescue. His reading has improved him no end.







Edgar Roni Figaro and Sabin Rene Figaro

Motif: a two-headed coin, set spinning

As Edgar is about to open a door, a girder falls from above. Sabin leaps in and catches it, superheroically, thus saving his brother from a righteous pancaking. "Now I know why I have these stupid muscles!" And they both know Edgar was right to let his brother take a different path all those years ago.

Locke Cole & Celes Chere

Motif: a bouquet of flowers and a head-scarf

As Tina leads the fleeing party across an unsturdy gantry, Celes drops her bandana – or rather Locke's bandana, which she found on the solitary island beach, and which inspired her to go on living. She returns to pick it up when the bridge gives way and she falls. The hand that catches her is Locke's. He has faced this scenario before, and this time he promises he won't let go. Aw.

Mog

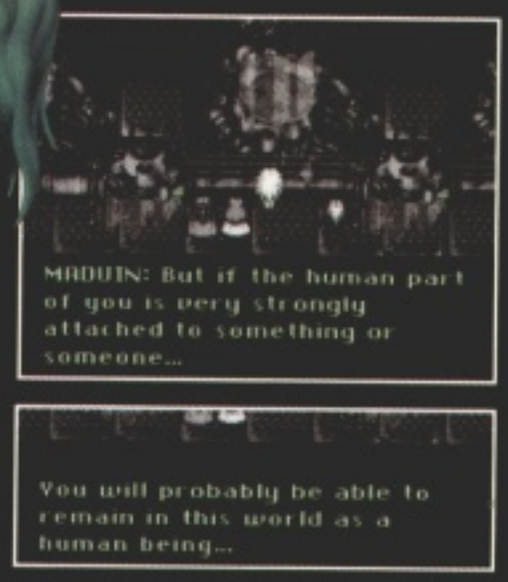
Motif: a clockwork musical box of waltzing moogles

Stumbled!! Mog climbs out of an air duct to feel the floor beneath give way. Fortunately the technically competent King of Figaro is on hand to retrieve him with a nearby crane. "The hair! Watch the hair!" shouts the normally laid-back moogle. Well, he has only got the one.

Terra Branford

Motif: a pendant draped over two goblets

Passing through a corridor of what used to be the Magitek Facility, a piece of magicite floats from Tina's side and speaks with the voice of Maduin, her father. He tells her that Espers must cease to exist here, although, if she is strongly attached to something in this world, the human part of her may yet remain. Then he vanishes.


MADUIN: But if the human part of you is very strongly attached to something or someone...
You will probably be able to remain in this world as a human being...

Strago Magus

Motif: a heavy tome of eldritch lore

The airship has already taken flight but Strago is not so easily beaten. With an uncharacteristically athletic leap (after, em, several pathetic attempts) he grasps the Falcon's hook lift and both he and Relm are carried deckwards. Time will have its work cut out putting the old gimmer six feet under, that's for sure...

Umaro

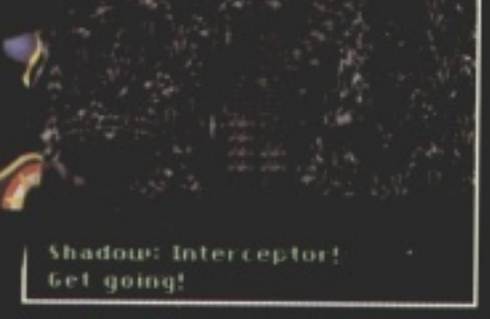
Motif: a skull and crossbones, surprised by the appearance of the moogles from the previous item...

When Edgar and Celes find the doorway blocked, Umaro springs into action by shouldering his way through the wall instead. Few words but much action, that sasquatch, and his theme tune does boast some top tuba moments.

Gau

Motif: a deep sea diver's helmet (with something inside?)

Gau boasts loudly that he can "find short cut!", although it transpires that his great idea is to jump down a steep hill and sledge it on his knees. He introduces the others to his grand scheme by flinging Celes down an incline and rolling after her, laughing all the way to the bottom.



Shadow

Motif: an apple, pierced suddenly by two shuriken

Silently, Shadow hangs back and splits off from the others. Nobody notices except Interceptor, who follows, but the faithful dog is ordered to return to the ship. The lone ninja takes refuge in a corner and makes a solemn pledge to his dead partner Baram that he will make a new life, no longer haunted by the past.

Gogo

Motif: a veiled helm of curious design

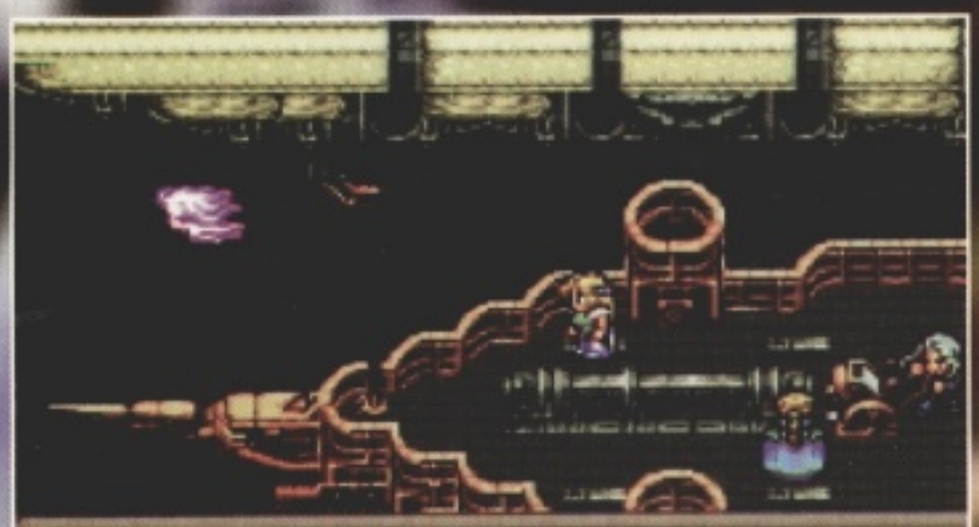
When the party is divided by a sliding platform, Edgar gives Celes instructions for its operation on one side and tells Gogo to copy her on the other side. They are soon reunited by Gogo's perfect replication of the procedure, although an attempt to follow in Celes' footsteps causes the mimic to fall down the gap. Cue comedy eyeballs in the dark... (this is where the end sequence usually crashes, incidentally).

Relm Arrowny

Motif: a glittering artist's brush

Finding him lagging behind the rest, Relm helps her old grandfather down an escalator by way of a piggyback ride. She suggests that she might one day paint his portrait – a request that is met with understandable objection – but stresses that this will be purely on canvas...

The Escape



Tension mounts again as Kefka's stronghold accelerates its collapse into ruin. Terra collects her strength and takes to the air in Esper form, leading the airship clear of the geological turmoil that is rapidly consuming the Tower. She succeeds, just, but on the deck of the Falcon the others watch helplessly as the last piece of Magicite flies upwards and dissipates. Magic, and Espers, no longer have a place in this world. Terra fades and tumbles from the sky. Acting on his instinct once again, Setzer sends his vessel hurtling into the clouds.

Back in Mobliz, the children watch a shining star shoot across the sky in the distance. They know who it must be. One brings word to the others and they run indoors, where Katarin is in the final stage of childbirth. Gathering round, they offer encouragement to hang... on... in... there... The main characters are recovering from their

concussion caused by Setzer's desperate manoeuvre. Celes checks anxiously on her friends and spies Terra collapsed on the edge of the deck. Is she...? Terra stirs. She's shaken, but otherwise... human.

"Thank you, Setzer!"

"Didn't I tell you? This is the fastest airship in the world!"

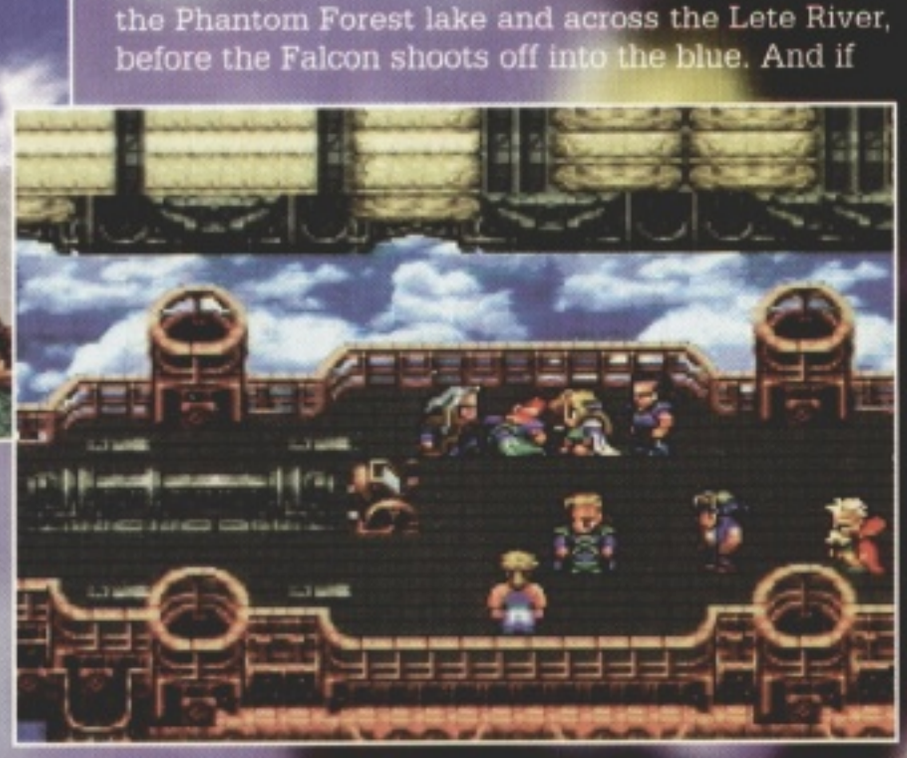
The design credits roll against a flying scene backdrop, filmed with some stunning Mode 7 'cinematography'. A flock of birds appears in a summer sky, passing over a boat plying the crisp blue waves below them.

The birds accompany the Falcon as it skims low over the ocean, the downward thrust of its propellers leaving an irregular wake. Reaching land, the world looks fresh but unfamiliar – everything is pure and verdant, not like the parched and tainted earth under Kefka's reign. The World of Rebirth?

The people below are hard at work, repairing the damage to their towns, and the seeds planted in Kohlingen have sprouted green shoots. There's an interesting reprise of the *FF2* end theme as Duanes clutches a newborn child in the caves below Mobliz.

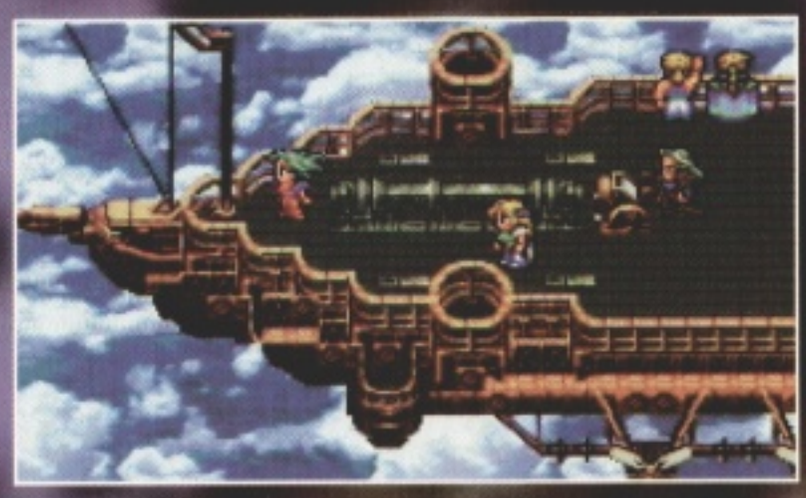
Back to the airship: a minor comic moment as Edgar tries it on one last time with Celes, but doesn't notice that she has returned to Locke's side and he's actually talking to Relm. Standing on the prow, Tina removes her headband and lets her hair fly free in the wind.

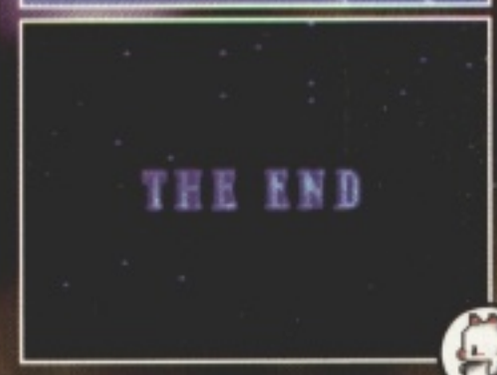
The final scenes follow the birds as they fly down from the mountaintops, swooping under a rope bridge near Baren Falls and passing through the Phantom Forest lake and across the Lete River, before the Falcon shoots off into the blue. And if



you really can't bear to turn it off – we know, it's hard to accept it's all over – then you're treated to a 'THE END' star field and the traditional FF theme from the saved file screen.

Total end sequence running time: 21 minutes, with its own original and continuous (not looping) 8-channel music. Magnificent.





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EXCITABLE VIEWPOINT PLAYBACK

Oi, you there, take your eyes off those girls below and read this bit. Write to us at Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Okay?

'A JOLLY FEEL'

I recently bought the PAL version of *Yoshi's Island* and I was amazed by the all-round greatness of it. As most people have realised, it easily outclasses *DKC* and its sequel, but no-one seems to have compared it with the original *Super Mario World*. Recently I excavated my old *SMW* from the depths of my game cupboard to compare the two...

Graphics: Well, no contest, eh? I would even go as far as saying that *SMW*'s graphics could have been done on the NES (minus the scaling) but it was the first Super Famicom game, after all. *Yoshi*'s scribbly pics, however, were done deliberately in that style to give the game more character than the ACM they could have used (and I guess that, as Mario and Luigi are cast as babies in the game, the toddler-ish scrawl blends in perfectly).

Sound: *Yoshi*'s intro music-box tune is a work of genius (you can even hear the music-box clank and whirr) and the boss tune is also great: I love the early synthesiser-ness of it. But the other tunes, which give the game a jolly feel, are hardly *Plok!*. *SMW*'s whiny repetitiveness annoys me, though, so it's not as bad as it could have been.

Bosses: *SMW*'s end-of-level bosses feel like a chore to beat and are characterless compared to *Yoshi's Island*'s varied and astoundingly peculiar bunch (all of them are unforgettable, especially Bashful Bert and the Moon Raven) but most of them couldn't have even been considered without the help of the Super FX2 chip, to give *SMW* some credit.

Control: *SMW*'s control system was a nice attempt at using the new controller, and has nice inertia. *Yoshi*'s controls are simple and effective, and the egg-throwing becomes instinctive after a few goes. In the end I prefer *Yoshi*.

Challenge: *SMW* has more levels plus the Star World; *Yoshi's Island* has the challenge of getting a perfect score and the hidden levels.

After all this comparison, I have to vote *Yoshi's Island* as the better game, although *SMW* is still an all-time classic and beats 99.5% of all other platform adventures. This also shows how the best 16-bit games have evolved over five years. If this is how much Nintendo and others can push their now relatively feeble console through half a decade, what about the Nintendo 64? *Super Mario 64* seems amazing to us now, what will the sequel be like in 1999?

'BIBLE OF RUMOURS'

I am writing... er, sorry. Shigs is working on at least two other SNES titles, right? Hmm. We've had a new *Mario*, *Mario Kart* is to be redone on the N64, as are *PilotWings* and *F-Zero* (well, almost). What does that leave? *ZELDA*! And, according to Digitiser (which could be renamed the Bible of Rumours, I grant you), there is a possibility of either a new *Zelda* or a *Zelda All-Stars* thingummy being presently developed. A new one please, Shigs! The first two were quite good, yes, but are nowhere near *Zelda III* and *Link's Awakening* (would this be updated?). Other rumours suggest that Link and co. are in for the rendered treatment à la *Super Mario RPG*. Any confirmation on this?

Alan McDonald, Cumbernauld, Scotland

We can't confirm or deny it at the moment. All we know for definite is that there will be another couple of Shigs-produced SNES titles announced soon, and the strongest rumours suggest one to be a new *Zelda* game and the other to be an *F-Zero* update. Whatever they are, like *Yoshi's Island* they'll justify hanging on to your 16-bit.

'BUTCH AND MASCULINE'

On your list of games for release on the Nintendo 64 I noticed *Killer Instinct 2*. Recently, GamesMaster showed footage of the game. I was amazed at the graphical improvements and detail on the new backgrounds and characters. I also liked the idea of the new special move meter. There was, however, something terribly odd with some of the characters I saw. Some, like Glacius, looked stunted, while others like Orchid and the new character Kim looked too butch and masculine. Some of the characters' heads also looked a bit big.

Please pass my concerns onto Rare, if possible. The first game was brilliant. I don't want to see deformed characters spoiling the sequel. What do you think of *Killer Instinct 2* so far?

Martin Chester, Winslow, Bucks

It's too late for Rare to change anything about it, of course – the coin-op's currently keeping punters happy the world over. But we'd agree with what you're saying: some of the characters' new forms *do* look very strangely proportioned, and Wil reckons their faces make them look like puppets out of Gerry Anderson's Terrahawks. We'll pass your concerns on to Rare by printing them here. Well, Rare?

Do we like the game? Yes.

What do these girls' physiques say about the minds of the designers, we ask.

Breasts bigger than Pammy's and chins bigger than Jimmy Hill's are all the rage. *(Call my plastic surgeon now. – Alison)*

STAR LETTER

LICENSED CACK

The Nintendo 64 apparently has a 'Dream Team', a band of developers so elite that only a small number of titles may be released for the N64, compared to the hundreds on the PSX. I know that quantity does not equal quality, and we've certainly seen that with the SNES, but doesn't this mean that there will be a lack of diverse titles and that Western gamers will be fed a diet of sports sims and licensed cack like *GoldenEye*?

Many diverse titles only make it to the SNES in Japan, and even relatively mainstream titles like *Puyo Puyo* and *Chrono Trigger* have never received a UK release. Nintendo seem to be doing the opposite of what they set out to do: produce highly playable games that appeal to everyone. This doesn't mean you have to tie in a licence with every flipping title – *Mario* games never relied on anything but pure playability. *Killer Instinct 2* and *GoldenEye* are not the flagship titles I expect Nintendo to promote in the West. Sure, there will be *Mario 64* and others, but wouldn't you rather see third-party updates of *Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, *Parodius* and *Super Tennis* besides *Mario Kart R* and *Mario 64*, like the selection that SNES owners had at the UK launch in '92?

Hiroshi Yamauchi said that, "without the N64, there may not be a future for videogames." The future of videogames lies in original titles, as Nintendo said, and they put this into practice with their 12 month release window: you can only release games on the Ultra 64 which are not available for any other system, and you can then release these games on another system after 12 months. When you buy your Nintendo 64 and wonder where all the titles like *Goemon* and *Super Tennis* are, please realise that they are on the PSX right now – in Japan, that is.

Even the classic *Castlevania* and *SFII* series has moved to the PSX, and the news that Square are publishing for other machines doesn't surprise me. It's not that I don't like Nintendo, I do – but I just wish they wouldn't just rely on their *Mario/Zelda* titles so much. I don't think I could stomach *KI2* and Cranky Kong's Quest.

Richard Melville, Exeter, Devon

This is something we're a mite concerned about, too. We certainly don't want to see a Nintendo 64 situation develop to mirror that of the PlayStation – where a steaming pile of pump games appeared within months of its release and continue to arrive at a steady rate now – but we can sympathise with your wishes to see games of a bravely original nature. The thing is, you *will* see games that are genuinely different, but Ninty are well aware that, especially in the West, graphically extravagant beat-'em-ups sell consoles, hence the focus that will no doubt be trained upon *Killer Instinct* when the system debuts over here.

It's certainly sad to see updates of *Castlevania* and *Goemon* appearing on Sony's machine after their previous incarnations have become so fondly regarded on the SNES, and it'll be interesting to see how well the Nintendo 64 will fare without this core of third-party releases to supplement the likes of *Mario* and *Kirby*.

Certainly, Nintendo simply aren't going to be able to challenge Sony on equal terms: the foolish will continue to interpret quantity as an adequate substitute for quality, and there'll be an awful lot of PlayStations sold on this basis alone.

(Yoshi's Island 64?) I can't imagine how far 3D can be pushed...

Andrew Crane, Bournemouth, Dorset

Our decision to place *Super Mario World* one notch above *Yoshi's Island* in last month's definitive guide to the top 100 best SNES games ever will have no doubt annoyed you, then. We made the decision after considering which of the two games we played most intensely at the time of their respective releases, and decided that *SMW* kept us just that little bit more glued to the joypad. There's little between them – they're both works of genius – but cheers for the analysis anyway.

Yoshi's Island 64? Slobber, slobber...

'CUT THE MUSTARD'

I was reading your Nintendo Versus The World article in issue 39, and I was annoyed by what Steve Jarrat said about Europeans. What is he trying to say with, "Europeans are less loyal, though"? When the SNES was being developed, we had a choice – either get a new machine from a company who have already released two big-selling consoles with a great line-up of games, or wait for a new console from a well-known company that was basically in the same position but with a smaller line-up of games which were more expensive. Everyone I knew who was interested in buying a console was waiting for the SNES. To me, that seems pretty loyal. It was basically the same with the NES and Game Boy. Now that people see that the SNES has lasted better than the Mega Drive in the long run, they know that Nintendo don't give up quickly, they concentrate on one machine and don't go making new machines every five minutes (hide the Virtual Boy). Nintendo have a selection of good consoles, while Sega have got their few, but they also have a pile of flops (Mega CD and 32X) and never-happened (Neptune and Nomad). If you did buy a Mega CD on the promise of lots of great software, you probably don't trust Sega at the moment. But Sony haven't got a record like this. One of the main reasons the SNES sold was because of the great software. Sega haven't got this with the Saturn. Sony have with the PlayStation. If Nintendo want to sell the N64 they don't want to show with the technology, they want to show us some great games. So far only a few look likely to cut the mustard. But, as always, I'm backing Nintendo all the way.

Adrian Purser, Poole, Dorset

What Steve was saying – quite rightly – was that the Japanese traditionally appear to be the most brand-loyal consumers you'll find, and, having bought Nintendo videogaming goods and enjoyed them, will buy anything with the same label on in the future. The difference between Western and Japanese gamers isn't that simple, of course: you've got to bear in mind that the standard of living of the average gamer in Japan is higher than that of their counterparts here – when a new console is released, they don't necessarily have to pack up their old system and games and flog them to raise enough cash for a new model, and many gamers have numerous systems lying around to play games on (indeed, just about every PlayStation owner in Japan has probably held onto their Super Famicom in order to play out the rest of Square's 16-bit releases, for example).

Videogamers anywhere *are* brand-loyal consumers – the legendary system wars (Speccy versus C64, ST versus Amiga, NES versus Master System, etc.) are ample proof of this – but, when faced with a PlayStation now rather than a Nintendo 64 later, there's an enormous number of gamers who simply don't give a toss about what badge is on the casing. We applaud your faith in Nintendo, but perhaps it isn't healthy to put *quite* so much faith in them. At

THE SUPER PLAY INTERESTING -O-METER

- **The Nintendo 64** Hold on to your potatoes...
- **Guinness** Yum
- **Arthur Atkinson** Look, mum, I'm skipping!
- **The 'Grarse** Caz and co. back on form
- **Summer** Lunch hours in tha park again
- **Winter** Snow joke (sorry)
- **Babylon Zoo** One pump single does not a career make
- **Jo Brand** Two gags do not a career make
- **Hooch** Retch
- **Square jumping ship** Boo!

the moment their machine looks like being the gnat's elbows, but they're ultimately as fallible as anyone. Just keep reading *Super Play* for the most reliable and honest coverage of the machine and you won't go far wrong...

'FAT SWEATY COPPERS'

There's a fan of The Fast Show at *Super Play*, isn't there? The spinal reference "You ain't seen me, right!" must have perplexed many readers.

How about Paul Whitehouse and Charlie Higson reviewing a game? Or a list of the Fat Sweaty Coppers' favourite SNES games? You could print the enclosed recipe for Cheesy Peas. Brilliant!

Perhaps your header on the cover should read as follows: NOW 99.9% for 16 and 64 bit NINTENDO and 0.1% for THE FAST SHOW.

"Now, um, er, Ted, um, er..."

If any of you are starting the "Get Lisa I'Anson sacked from Radio 1" petition, then I'll sign it and so will most people I know.
Matthew J. Rowbotham, Doncaster, South Yorkshire
Thanks for the recipe, Matthew. It took you long enough to pick up on our leanings, though: the first reference appeared way back in issue 27, from January '95. Anyway... erm... I don't suppose you have any interest in French cinema...?

'A GENEROUS BABYSITTER'

First, thanks for a great magazine. *(You're welcome. – the Super Play team)* A few years back I had a US SNES but had to sell it through financial hardship (aaah!). Fortunately now my nephew has a SNES, so everyone thinks I'm a generous babysitter, whereas I really just take every opportunity to get some gaming in! Anyway, now I'm back in gaming mode I have returned to *Super Play* and still find it the most informative and professional magazine available.

When I got my SNES from DMC Consoles in Bath *(sigh, I remember it well – Tony)*, I got a copy of the wonderfully doleful Japanese game *Xandra's Big Adventure* (an early *Super Play* recommendation). It was such as atmospheric game and very Japanese (to my mind always the best way for a game to be), I'd love to get hold of a copy again. During my break from SNES ownership I'm sure I read a snippet in *Super Play* regarding an English translation of the game. Was one ever made? Obviously, if so, this would be the one I would want. Any information and any help you could give me in tracking down a copy – in Japanese, UK or US form – would be gratefully appreciated. You haven't got the old *Super Play* review copy stuck in the bottom of a drawer somewhere, have you? (Well, it's worth a try.)
Tim Brown, Southville, Bristol
We don't have the old review copy, sadly, 'cos it got nicked by some scummy tea-leaves about a year or so ago. What you'll be wanting is a copy of *Whirly*, which we've only ever seen on-sale once, in the second-hand section at Tottenham Court Road Computer Exchange, leading us to believe that it's never been released officially in the UK but in some other PAL-compatible territory. If anyone knows anything more about this mystery, write in and tell us.

'THICK ON THE GROUND'

Over the last few years my favourite game genres have been fighting and driving. I believe *SFII* has now been superseded by *VF2/Tekken*, and *Mario Kart* by *Sega Rally/Ridge Racer*. I say this because if *Mario Kart 64* remains as similar to play as the original I shall be disappointed after the added control mechanics offered by the aforementioned 32-bit titles. In the recent interview with 'Mr. Nintendo', Hiroshi Yamauchi, he implied that the fashion of impressive fighting and driving games was somehow self-destructive. I would be interested in your comment as I feel this is a bit of a cop-out, as maybe Nintendo felt they could not compete with the likes of *VF2* due to their lack of experience in this arena... Okay, we're gagging for *SFIII*, but will it be a *Toshinden/X-Men* hybrid, without the reversals, axis movement and close contact of realistic hand-to-hand?

We note from the 32-bitters that the killer app software is not exactly thick on the ground and comes once yearly. I can only assume the same will be true of Nintendo, if not longer due to their superior development and testing. How many projects can Nintendo split their class A programmers over before the end result becomes diluted?

N64 software at £80 a pop for a second-class third-party title (and that's only a small cart) means that I shall purchase the machine solely for killer apps.
Paul Daniel, Bromley, Kent
The allegations made by Yamauchi in his Shoshinkai address were targetted more at the bandwagoneers who've sprung to clone the likes of *Virtua Fighter*, not *Virtua Fighter* itself, which anyone would agree was an innovative title. The likes of *Zero Divide* and *Criticom* are merely blatant clones, and no discerning gamer would buy them in preference to the bona fide article. Now, doesn't that sound like a waste of programming and design time?

You have a point about Ninty's finite resources, and it's tempting to envision them spreading their talents a bit thin, what with the amount – and scale – of the projects they're currently handling. Your claim about killer apps is rather rum, though – it's likely that Ninty will deliver at least half-a-dozen in the system's first year on sale alone. Regarding *SFIII*, no-one knows what its finished form will take, although we're banking on polygons being a major part of the equation.

'MAGIC NINTY INGREDIENT'

I like Nintendo. They are, undoubtedly, the best games

HIGHLIGHTS

'I am seriously considering buying *Yoshi's Island*. However, I have seen several 'snap-shots' of the graphics and have been slightly put off. Could you please tell me whether or not I should worry about this?'
Philip Kennedy, Northwich, Cheshire
Frankly, we're lost for words...

'I want to know,
Sex mayoress,
If you are the one,
I can caress.'
Bob 'the Mad Rebel', Dumfriesshire, Scotland
There were 12 verses to Bob's Valentine's poem to Alison, but we felt this was the one Shakespeare would be most proud of.

'Hi from Mexico.'
Jose Julian Nunez Rios, Irapuoto, Mexico
Hi from England.

'This is the biggest form of traitory yet in the gaming world, and of all the great game producers, it had to be Square.'
Josef Sarmast, Norway
But money talks. Even (especially?) in videogames.

KINDLY LEAVE THE STAGE

Q What's big and grey, sits at the end of your bed and takes the p*ss out of you?
A A kidney dialysis machine.
Philip Potter, Malvern, Worcs
2/10
Another effort in very poor taste. What is it with you people?

Q What is the favourite game of Liam and Noel out of Oasis?
A Galaga.
Gerard McCauley, Sutton Coldfield
6/10
A videogame-related joke that's actually quite funny. Well done.

Q How many Mega Drive owners does it take to make chocolate chip cookies?
A Ten – one to make the mixture and nine to peel the smarties.
James Boyce, Co. Down, Ireland
5/10
Another funny videogame-related gag. What's going on?

Q Why did the chicken cross the road?
A To buy her friend in Burger King.
Sheldon Marsh, Martock, Somerset
1/10
Oh, you *had* to go and spoil it, didn't you, Sheldon.

Get 5/10 or above for your joke and win something spesh! Kindly Leave The Stage, Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

company in the world. It's just... Sony's PlayStation is a very, very good console. *Ridge Racer* and *Tekken* are two top standard games, and although they still don't have that magic Ninty ingredient, they have *something* that makes them really great games. Something that Sega almost never had. (Bar *Ecco*. And *Sonic*'s not bad either, come to that.)

So, although I think that the N64 will be brilliant, I also think that Sony's PlayStation will stand by the N64 and neither will dominate the other in the way *Super Play* seems to think. There is room for both.

John, Wheaton Aston, Stafford

Of course one will dominate the other – one's going to sell more, isn't it? That's dominating in our book. We've never claimed there isn't room for both. Competition is a healthy thing, and we're all for it.

WRITE NOW!

Don't waste another moment reading this bit here, write to us here at:

Super Play,
Future Publishing,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath BA1 2BW.

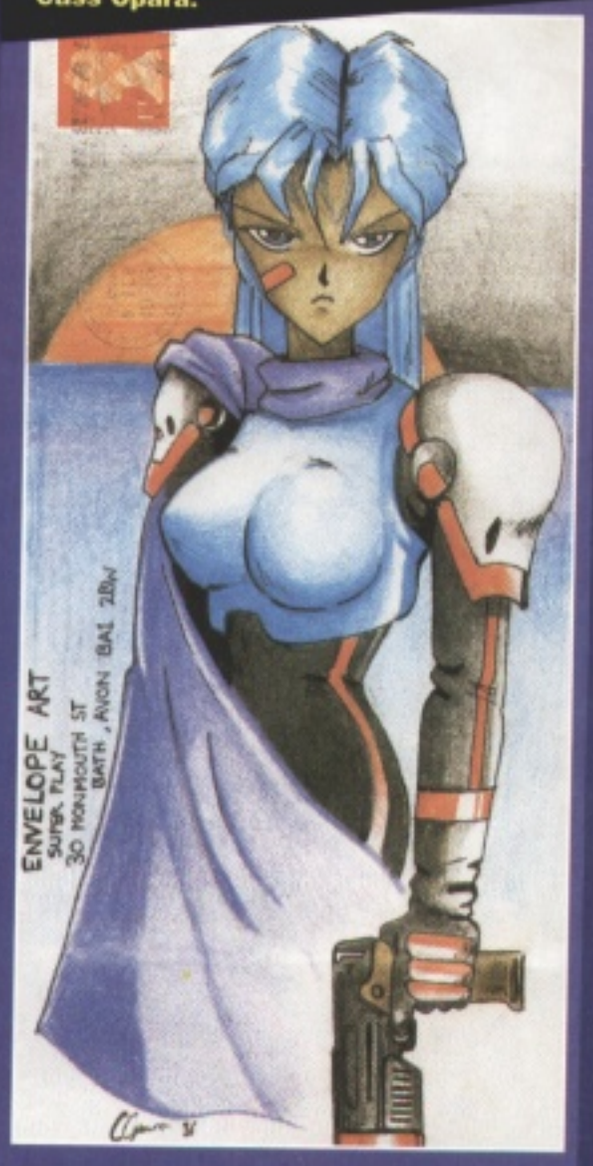
ENVELOPE ART

By way of finding a new method of captioning your artistic scribblings, we decided to link your pics to various consumer goods in a vague kind of way...

Oliver Norton's illustration of Yoshi. As you can see, he's saying, "I like that Colgate flavour."

Kieran Orwin's Cammy demonstrates the dangers of not using a Philips Wet and Dry Ladyshave.

"It's not make-up, boys, it's ammunition," she appears to say. She's certainly gone a bit heavy with the old slapstick. Thanks to Cass Opara.



If J. Smith's character were in an ad for a product, erm, that product would have to be Studio Line Styling Gelée. It keeps eyebrows in place all day long.

Rawya Al Malik's Tokyo Babylon girls are demonstrating the horrors of shopping at Etams. "Ghastly dress, dahling," she's saying.

IRRESPONSIBLE pictures

The sailors were confused as they tried to keep their footing in the impossibly angled room. And how could they review videos with that unnameable hideous shoshing sound?

THE COCKPIT
Kiseki Films 15
70 minutes (subtitled) RRP: £12.99

There's an old joke about the Kamikaze Pilots' Reunion Party, but Ensign Nogami could just make the guest list. He's the willing pilot of a 'cherry blossom' – a heavy-duty missile with a human guidance system – whose one-way mission is beset by hitches. Sensing Nogami's potential loss of honour, his colleagues pledge to help him out. It's with a simple premise like *Sonic Boom Squadron* that author Leiji Matsumoto demonstrates the contradictions and absurdities of society: even when you see plane after plane shot down in flames, it all seems so *reasonable*.

Such territory makes me want to postulate on cultural legacies at work in a post-Imperialist nation, when all you want to know is whether the vid is worth watching or not.

That said, you probably know more about the Japanese than you think. Take *Slipstream*, in which a disgraced Luftwaffe pilot is given the chance to redeem himself by flying escort for a bomber carrying a 'secret project'. It may be set in 1944 but it demonstrates the same moral dilemmas and revisionist fantasies you'll have seen in a dozen sci-fi anime flicks. And *Knight Of The Iron Dragon*, which throws together two stranded soldiers makes some universal points.

While taking every opportunity to stress the insane futility of war, these stories exhibit a heartfelt respect for the honour of those who fight and for the dedication that drives them to selfless suicidal acts. War may present us with unthinkable horrors, but it exposes our finest qualities and makes giants of little men.

A fascinating anthology with some memorable animation that rewards those prepared to give it some extra thought.

Zy Nicholson

7 out of 10

ARMITAGE III Part 2 Flesh and Stone
Pioneer Anime 15
30 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £6.99

It seems that I was in the minority when I reviewed the first instalment of Pioneer's *Blade Runner*-ish tale. Every other review waxed lyrical whereas I only saw something that took an unoriginal idea and went nowhere with it. Still, there are another three episodes to go after this, so there's hope yet.

After nearly killing the nasty D'anclaude, who she thought was responsible for the Type 3 (robots who are nearly indistinguishable from humans) murders, Armitage disappears. But when the deaths continue, even though D'anclaude is in intensive care at the police hospital, suspicion begins to falls on our heroine. Her partner, Ross, continues the investigation. He's convinced that Armitage is innocent, but, as more and more Type 3s are disposed of, and a novelist Third is discovered having mentioned Armitage in her dying words, the case and Armitage's guilt seem confirmed.

I guess the problem I have with *Armitage III* is the main character herself. One moment she's wrestling to come to terms with not being human, the next she's seemingly enjoying crippling a couple of would-be muggers and then she's acting like a hyperactive ten year-old. Evidence of a complex character struggling to come to terms with her existence as a robot, or a rather confusing and badly scripted story? You decide, but I found I didn't really care for Armitage, or whether she was guilty or not. None of the other characters really get a chance to flesh out either, and even Armitage's partner, Ross, doesn't have any personality beyond the usual mean and moody.

Yes, *Armitage III* is getting better and on the strength of this second episode I'm looking forward to seeing the story develop, but I'm still not convinced it's as good as everyone else thinks it is.

Wil Overton

6 out of 10

SOL BIANCA
Kiseki Films 15
55 minutes (subtitled) RRP: £10.99

Feb, March, April, May and June – months of the year or the obvious choice of names for the five glamorous space pirates aboard the Sol Bianca spacecraft? Probably sounds pretty exotic to the Japanese, but it strikes me as a little desperate as a naming convention. Still, when you also symbolically name the head of the revolution Doctor de la Paz (Doctor of the peace) you know that subtlety is not in play here.

This is space adventure, but who cares if there's no depth of intrigue to it. For once, I was glad to sit down to exciting, unhesitating drama...

Set in a future where ambient lift music flits gently on the breeze inside the planets' airlocks, we catch up with the pirates as they chance upon a stowaway (Rim) who is bound for the planet Tres. It emerges Rim has a motive for heading for this forsaken planet where systematic executions and torture are the norm. Not the place for a picnic, that's for sure, the whole place is in disarray what with a revolution taking place and all! Even the emperor is called Battros.

The girls soon discover that the Golden Box (or the Gnosis) which contains the "learning of the universe") is to be found on Tres. And that, for them, is reason enough to deliver Rim to this place. And so, they undertake a treacherous journey. The girls are pretty brave, considering... Even when captured by raving and raging megalomaniac Battros, they claim that their freedom is not for sale. Bold words indeed. Fortunately hitech weaponry and a timely solar eclipse are on their side. Rest assured that there's much fighting and action although the resolution of the whole story is a bit of a blink and you'll miss it affair. Definitely one to watch... don't read the plot on the box though – its errors will only confuse you.

Alison Harper

8 out of 10

I.P. NEWSLINE

At £7.99 each *Super Play* reckons these are top buys, and that's not just because we want some freebies!

Publish and be dammed!

March sees the release of a new batch of books from Manga Publishing which collect together manga previously seen in the likes of Manga Mania and the Street Fighter comic. Funnily enough, collected manga volumes are precisely the way things work in Japan. You might buy a weekly comic to see the latest installment, but a true collector will have his or her favourites in a library of softcover volumes. This also explains why the usual telephone directory-sized Japanese comic weeklys are printed on paper the likes of which you used to paint on in primary school.

Fans of Adam Warren's *Dirty Pair*, *Crying Freeman*, *Appleseed*, *Dominion Tank Police* and *Street Fighter II* should take a look in their local bookstore around the 25th March, but *SFII* fans might like to direct their eyes to the bottom of the page where we've got ten copies of the *SFII* anime movie manga to give away.

VIDEO DIARY

April 1996

MANGA VIDEO

Mad Bull 34 – Part 3: City of Vice
Giant Robo – Part 3: Magnetic Web Strategy
Vampire Princess Miyu – Part 3: Fragile Armour & Part 4: Frozen Time
Cyber City OEDO – Parts 1-3 on one video

ANIME PROJECTS

Released May 6th
Urusei Yatsura – TV series Vol 8
Bubblegum Crisis – Episode 6: Red Eyes

Anorak trivia

MIchael Jackson's done it. So has Matthew Sweet and now rockin' hairmeister Jon Bon Jovi's got in on the act. But what? Anime in pop videos, of course! Okay, so you probably haven't caught US rocker and full-time Lum fanatic Matthew Sweet recently, but you can't fail to have missed a fleeting glimpse of Akira in Jackko and Janet's duet Scream. Now, although if you blink you'll miss it, Bon Jovi's latest 'These Days' features a fleeting glimpse of none other than that pretty soldier Sailor Moon. Albeit not in animated form, but an arcade machine that spits out huge colour posters of the girls (we kid you not).

And if that wasn't enough to keep the eagle of eyed amongst you happy, watch out for the forthcoming game from Bullfrog, *Syndicate Wars*, which features tiny video screens showing clips from *Ghost In The Shell*. In return, the *Ghost* video will feature adverts for the game.

GOSHOGUN
The Time Etranger
Manga Video 15

90 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £13.99

It's hard to know where to begin with *Goshogun – The Time Etranger*, but then the film itself doesn't seem to have much of a clue either. If you've ever read Iain Banks' 'The Bridge' however, you'll probably have a headstart on everyone else (go on then... off to the library with you).

French heroine Remy Shimada ('Etranger' is french for 'stranger' or 'foreigner', if that's any help) is in a coma after crashing her car, but as if her injuries aren't enough, she also has a fatal disease rapidly spreading throughout her body, and, according to her doctor, she has but hours to live. In Remy's mind though, the battle for her life is far from over. Once a member of the crew of the giant robot Goshogun she is reunited with her comrades in a mysterious village which they cannot leave and where fate has announced their imminent deaths. While, from within her subconsciousness, Remy and her friends battle the bizarre town's inhabitants and their destiny, her real (now 40 years older) team-mates gather around her bedside, only able to watch and wait.

To say this is an 'odd' release from Manga is to state the obvious. Coming, as it does, from a TV series, Japanese viewers have the advantage of knowing the characters, but unsuspecting UK buyers will have to fend for themselves as the story jumps around from the real world to Remy's mind and to flashbacks of her as a lonely child. Although punctuated by some great action sequences and a disturbing atmosphere surrounding the 'zombie Arab' town, *Goshogun*'s one and half hour running time could easily wear down the less captivated viewer. Hell, some might even call it boring and tedious. Approach with caution.

Wil Overton

5 out of 10

WIN WIN WIN WIN WIN WIN

STREET FIGHTER II
The Animated Movie
M A N G A

Those awfully nice folks at Manga Publishing have given us ten copies of the brand new *Street Fighter II The Animated Movie manga* (phew!) to give away to discerning *Super Play* readers. These 184 page, full colour volumes are the pucker article with story and art by top *SFII* artist Takayuki Sakai and are based, funnily enough, on the *Street Fighter II* ani... *(snip – Ed)*.

A copy could be yours if you're lucky enough to be drawn out of the big *Super Play* Cammy beret. However, to get into the hat in the first place you'll have to be canny enough to answer this prickly *SFII* poser:

What is the latest version of *Street Fighter II* to be released by Capcom called?

Carve you answer on a dragon-punched postcard or the back of an envelope and send it to:

Chunner's a stunna
***Super Play*,**
Future Publishing
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

Closing date: 25th April

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● SNES (UK) 2 pads, arcade joystick plus 30 great games incl. Mana, DKC, Doom, Mario Kart, Allstars, Earthworm Jim, Punchout, Stuntrace FX and loads more all for only £350 or your closest offer. Call Iain (0131) 228 8265.

● UK SNES, games, 2 joypads. Games inc: MK 2, MK 3, Killer Instinct, Doom. All boxed, all new. £250 o.n.o. Call Dave (0181) 856 7146.

● Mega Drive plus18 games, 2 control pads £250 o.n.o. Call Damian (01902) 658536.

● Jap Famicom (Scart) 6 games + UK Universal Adaptor plus 2 pads. Quick sale £120. Must collect. Ring Khalid (01819) 689767 between 6-7 pm.

● UK SNES, 2 controllers (inc Pro Pad) 6 great games inc. Secret of Mana, Mario All Stars, Super Metroid etc. Excellent condition, boxed with instructions £150 ono + mags. S. Robinson (01773) 590894.

● Amiga 500 + 1 good joy stick, mouse and mat, dust cover, power pack. Over 100 games, some boxed. In good condition. All for £180. Ring Tom (01923) 663076.

● US SNES Scart with the best 16 games! Plus Multitap and hundreds of magazines. All boxed with instructions as new. £280. Phone Fraser Hamilton (01495) 715754. You collect.

● Amiga 1200 with 170 MB hard drive, sound sampler, excellent DTP software, loads of games, magazines with coverdisks, mouse, pad and leads for £350. Call Michael (01274) 871645.

● SNES for sale. Two joypads, Street Racer, Mario World, Prince of Persia and Mortal Kombat £100 o.n.o. Tel Richard (01328) 820716.

● Playstation Scart, all leads and PSU, 2 pads, memory card, Tekken, Ridge Racer, everything plays at full speed, full screen. All as new, boxed with instructions. Call Julian (01923) 285766.

● Game Gear with adaptor, TV tuner, cable to watch all channels, carry case, magnifier and one game. Fully boxed and installed. Phone Allan after 1pm (0454) 435219.

● UK SNES – 10 top games incl – SSFII, Mario Kart. Adaptors, pads, all for £150 or swap for PSX, Saturn, Neo-Geo and games. Call Steve after 7pm (0181) 524 1182.

● UK SNES 28 great games, eg DKC2, JMW2, Doom, 3 control pads, mouse, superscope. Worth over £800. Tel (01954) 210184.

● Super Nintendo games, 150 for exchange, many top titles. Call Steven (01707) 268285.

● Mega Drive and 10 games all boxed and in good condition. £170 ono. Call Robert (01353) 777364.

● SNES for sale, 9 good games incl. Theme Park and Chaos Engine, TWO controllers, Game Genie and Super Game Boy with 3 games and loads of mags all worth £400 but sell for £300 ono. Call Chi Phan (01207) 570493.

● SNES with 16 games including Lethal Enforcers (with gun) Secret of Mana, DKC, MK3, Doom, 2 pads, Scope Gun, Action Replay adaptor, all worth £1,000 but sell for £400. Call Thomas (01923) 663076.

WANTED

● Wanted: X-Men (Marvel) comics. Any editions, especially Dark Phoenix Saga. Tel: (01328) 878432.

● Has anyone got Monopoly? I want to buy it – £15 paid. Call Stuart on (01227) 456359 evenings.

● Wanted urgently any broken or unwanted Super NES joypads. Will pay for the cost of postage. Electronic students need these for a course project. Phone Dee on (0181) 8565838 pm to sort out any details and to arrange payment.

● Metroid (Nes) £10 + Super Empire Strikes Back (UK) £20. Ask for Stuart, Saturdays only. (01977) 798779.

● Worms wanted (UK) will part exchange mystical Ninja 1 for it or just buy. Ring (01904) 627829 after 5pm on weekdays.

● Desperately wanted Lemmings and Lemmings II. Call Emma (01225) 317363.

● F Fight (UK) for SNES, Elite for NES, Brighton and Hove area only, no time wasters. Call (01273) 702974.

● Goemon 2 – pay up to £20, FFIII (US) in good condition. Will pay £25. Both must be boxed with instructions. Will swap unboxed Game Gear and Jungle Book for FFIII!?! Call Peter (01903) 783144 weekends.

● Chrono Trigger, FFIII, Front Mission. Will pay £25 – £30 each. Phone James after 6pm (01580) 765561.

● UK SNES games wanted: Super Empire Strikes Back (Pay £17) and Zelda III (Pay £15). Must have box and instructions. Call Michael 01697 343251.

● FFIII (US) or Chrono Trigger (US) – I'll pay £40 or 2 of these: Unirally, FX Racer, SFII Turbo, NBA Jam, Star Wars, Zombies (all UK). Please help me! Ask for Rob (01446) 749662.

● FFII or FFIII (US). Money waiting. Call (01924) 257507.

● 2 SNES games, VGC, Primal Rage £35. Striker (no box or instructions for Strikers) £5-10. Call Rick (0181) 641201.

GAMES FOR SALE

● FFII & III with adaptor, also wanted Wolfenstein. Write to G. Fordham, 101 Beacons Field Road, Hastings, E Sussex, TW34 3TW.

● Super Play, Gamesmaster, Sega Power (1 issue) and NMS mags for sale, also a few comedy videos as well! For further info call Matthew (01911) 556250.

● Super Play issues 7-36 – offers? Megatech issues 1, 3-18, 20-22, 24-31. Mega Drive Advanced issues 1-6, 12-17 offers? Call Nick (01279) 865896.

● SNES games: Zombies, Aladdin, FIFA Soccer, Street Racer, Alien 3 – £20 each or all for £85. Write to Paul Mannus, 8 Baronscourt Lane, Carryduff, Belfast, N Ireland, BT8 8RR.

● SFII posters £5 inc p+p. Dragonball posters £5 inc p+p each sent folded in A4 envelope. Call Martin (0121) 3576969.

● Final Fantasy III, Secret of Mana, Shadow Run, Earthbound, Illusion of Gaia, 7th Saga (all US). Offers. Call Chris (01292) 264147.

● UK DKC2 £30, US Yoshi's Island plus converter £40. UK Killer Instinct plus CD £30, Bomberman 3 £30, UK SNES plus Mario Allstars £50. All boxed and in shop condition. Call Ben for more info on (01708) 453502.

● Outrageous!! Classic SNES games, scored over 94%, Another World £7, Super Tennis £8 Cybernator £8, Mario All Stars £9 All US & boxed with manuals. Call Brendan (0171) 476 5092.

● UK DKC (£20), Sim City (£15) UK Prince of Persia (£15) UK Super Off Road (£10) UK also Rock and Roll Racing (£20). Call Andy (01932) 347022.

● UK SNES game for sale. Starblazer, Vortex & Gods, fully boxed in mint condition. £14 each or £35 the lot. Tel (0181) 830 1707.

● SNES UK games, only £10 each: Actraiser, Another World, Cybernator Dungeon Master, Jimmy Connors Tennis, Jurassic Park, Nigel Mansell's Championship. Legend of the Mystical Ninja, Super Star Wars. Call Philip (0121) 434 4927.

● Pop'n Twin Bee (UK £15) Super Probotector (UK £10) Goof Troop (US £10) or swap for RPG or manga, anime. Call Scott after 5pm 01375 374805.

● RPGs for sale. Evermore £40, FF3 £45, Chrono Trigger £40, Earthbound £30, Breath of Fire 2 £40, plus many others. Call Ann (0121) 6047524.

● My name is Robert. I'm 14 and am looking for a female penpal aged 13-15. I'll reply to first five letters. Must incl. a recent photo. Write to Robert Johnson, 3 St Leonards Walk, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry, Warmks, CV8 3FD.

MESSAGES AND EVENTS

● To the UK's first soccer manga: Thunder Bolt Nassir's fans, Bamen N1-Scene 2 – won't be out until late '96. I have to study for my cartooning diploma, sorry! Manaf Al-Muhandis.

● Manga and football – have you ever seen a sports manga before? Check out the first to introduce the field to you. For info write to: Manaf Al-Muhandis, Villa 77 Road 2418, Al-Eker 624, Bahrain.

● 16 year old male looking for female and male penpals aged 15+ who like computer games, manga and music. Write to James Stevens, Grafton Close, Coril Head, Braunton, N Devon, EX33 2EW.

● Essential X Men, 1, 2 & 3 collector's editions for sale. I also have HMS 3D, Super Play 25-40 and UFG1. Call Wun Pang on (0171) 2260881. Must collect, London area.

● Richard: Don't forget homework. Craig: Let your sister have a go. A double combo from Mum.

● To: Rawya Al-Malik, anyone who draws, plays RPGs and watches anime I want to be my friend! Oh, and anyone who does the above and 17+, I want as a penfriend too! Write! Manaf Al-Muhadis, Villa 777 Road 2418, Al-Eker 624, Bahrain.

● Any babes out there? I'm looking for female penpals (15-15) who like manga and anime. Please send photo. Write to Calum Robertson, 37 Southshoe Rd, Inverness, IV2 4XA.

● Super Play issues 1-33 plus Super Play Gold for sale. Superb condition. Make me an offer on (01359) 231121. Please ask for Barry.

● 17 year old Chinese male (Cantonese) seeking a Chinese female penpal aged between 15-19. Must be interested in at least two of the following, computer games, music, drawing and Chinese movies. If interested, please write to Colin Chan, 6 Mill Lane, Billingham, Cleveland, England, TS23 1HF. Please incl. photo if possible.

● 16 year old male looking for female and male penpals age 15+. I like SNES games and manga. Write to James Stevens, Grafton Close, Coril Head, Braunton, Devon EX33 2EW.

FANZINES

● New mag free! Includes everything from games to music to sport. Send SAE to Tom Spence, Beesknowe, Dunbar, East Lothian, EH42 1SY.

● A giant selection of cheats, tips, codes for Sega or Nintendo systems. Just send A4 sae plus £5 to Adrian Hind, 20 Airedale Court, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 5PF.

● Retrogamer issue 2. Manic Miner author Matthew Smith. Ultimate Jetpac to Atic Atac, Nintendo in The Arcades £1. Keith Ainsworth, 52 Kingsfield Rd, Orrell Park, Liverpool, L9 3AW.

● Journey's End: The RPG fanzine for all consoles. 5 issues now out £1.50 per issue or £5 for 4 issues. Ann Simpson, 230 Thornbridge Ave, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 2AL. Tel: (0121) 604 7524.

● Editor of new Manga fanzine seeks fans to work on the project with him. If you want to get involved in some way, please write to Martyn Jackson at the following address and explain where your interests lie. 11 Grove Rd, Churchdown, Gloucester GL3 2SN.

● Role Call – RPG fanzine covering imports on all machines, run by FFIII obsessives, (24 pages A4), four issues out now. £7 sub (six issues) or £1.20 each, postage inclusive. Write to Rachael Ryan, 25 Oakdene Avenue, Woolston, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4NU. Tel: (01925) 490910.

● Super Play issues 9-29 for sale and issues 35-40. The lot £35 or might swap for 3 good SNES games. Call Robert (01225) 33924.

SWAPS

● I will swap my Doom, Starwing and Breath of Fire (US) for your FFII and FFIII (US). Call Tony on (0141) 946 9992.

● Pants! I'm selling Sim City (UK) £20, SFII Turbo (UK) £20 also Mystic Quest for £20 or swap for another RPG. Phone Boycy on (01247) 818942.

● I will swap Shaq Fu, Street Fighter II Turbo, Super Smash TV or Super Return of Jedi for Dirt Trax FX, Super Off Road or Chase HQ all on Super NES. Call Ryan (01506) 883640.

● Swap my Yoshi's Island (US) for your FFIII (US) or Chrono Trigger (US). Call Dean (01634) 361411.

● UK swaps: F-Zero, MK 1 and 2, Batman Returns, Jungle Book or Starwing. Write to: G Long, 79 Riverside C.T., Oxford, OX14NQ. I really want Return of the Jedi.

● Swap Syndicate, Pop'n Twinbee (both mint) or Sensible Soccer (no box) for Sim City, DKC, Jedi, PGA or Super Bomberman. Consider double swap for Doom. Ring between 11-6pm (01685) 382521.

● I will swap my Killer Instinct (UK) for your SOM (UK). Must be boxed with instructions. Call Scott (0141) 7700636.

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NEW ENTRIES

The Return of... WHAT CART?

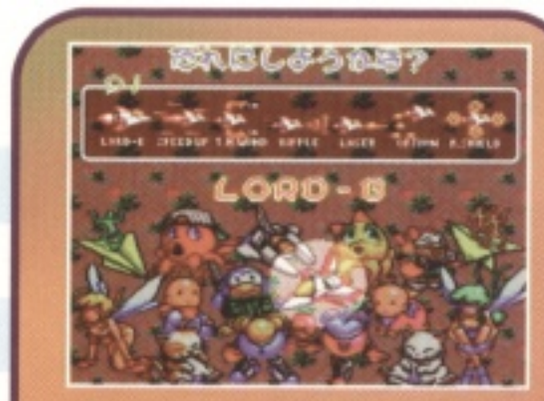
You asked for it... and so we are proud to herald the return of What Cart? So, here it is – the essential gaming directory for the Super NES.

NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
3D Baseball	(JAP) Jaleco	SP19	63% Loaded to the gills with Japanese text, making it difficult to tell what's going on. (Unless you're Japanese, obv.)
100% Cotton	(JAP) Datam Polystar	SP21	79% Content trades off to style in this great-looking scrolling shoot-'em-up starring a broomstick-riding witch.
90 Minutes	(UK) Ocean	SP39	55% Disappointing footy title that pales in the face of competition from *FIFA '96* and (especially) *ISSD*.
Aaahh!!! Real Monsters	(UK)Viacom	SP38	65% A marginally entertaining three-character platformer that's worth a laugh if you can pick it up at a budget price.
Addams Family Values	(UK) Ocean	SP31	75% An open exploration game, featuring plenty of Wandering About™ and Getting Bored™.
Alcahest	(JAP) Falken/Square	SP18	69% Taking *Zelda* and making it harder must've looked good on paper. The execution is uninspired if competent.
Andre Agassi Tennis	(US) Techmagic	SP22	52% Agassi might be able to pull Brooke Shields but his SNES game is crappy. Not a patch on *Super Tennis*, of course.
Animaniacs	(UK) Konami	SP26	28% Jon Nash said of this game: "Less a clever game based on a funny cartoon, more a grindingly tedious disaster." Ouch.
Ardy Lightfoot	(UK) Titus	SP29	83% A My First Platformer with cutesy graphics and predictable gameplay making it "fine for the young 'uns".
Astro Go! Go!	(JAP) Meldac	SP20	51% Amusing, *F-Zero* clone which reviewer Jon Davies disliked but of which Tony said "wasn't that bad actually."
Bassin's Black Bass	(US) Hot B	SP34	65% An original, relaxing, and surprisingly deep (sorry) fishing game. Yup, we said fishing game.
Batman Forever	(UK) Acclaim	SP36	61% A humourless, soulless game designed merely to fill boxes marked '*Batman Forever*'. Nice soundtrack, though.
Battle Cars	(US) Namco	SP19	73% Listen: weak two-player modes spoil racing games. And this *Mad Max*-esque effort has a very grotty one indeed.
Battle Pinball	(JAP) Banpresto	SP34	68% Pinball meets computer game designers and comes off worse. Bright colours don't make up for poor gameplay.
Beauty and the Beast	(UK) HudsonSoft	SP23	71% Lord knows how Hudson got the licence for a Disney game, but here it is and it's both pretty-looking and pretty dull.
Beavis and Butthead	(UK) Viacom	SP36	39% "This sucks my butt." "Yeah – ahuh – butt – ahuh huh." A truly offensive scrolly platformy beat-'em-uppy thing.
Big Hurt Baseball	(UK) Acclaim	SP39	70% A neat and tidy version of baseball with motion-captured graphics. But B-A-S-E-B-A-L-L? Give us *ISSD* any day.
Biker Mice from Mars	(UK) Konami	SP31	71% It tries so desperately to be *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* but fails on gameplay points. (The tacky Snickers license doesn't help.)
Blackhawk	(UK) Interplay	SP27	76% Pretender to the *Flashback* throne. Please, take careful note of the word 'pretender'.
Bonkers	(UK) Capcom	SP27	74% Cute platform fun. Can you say "kill the cute thing"? Like the cartoon with sub-*Animaniacs* film lampoons.
Boogerman	(UK) Interplay	SP32	56% Another. Tedious. Platform. Game. The novelty of super-powered farts and burps soon wears wafer thin.
Brain Lord	(US) Enix	SP25	81% Decent action RPG with some entertaining puzzly bits. It looks a bit wonky when compared to *Zelda III*, obviously.
Brandish	(US) Koei	SP34	53% More below-par RPG antics from the masters of under-par tat. Action-heavy *Soulblazer* wannabe, with nob graphics.
Breath of Fire	(US) Capcom/Square	SP24	80% The Super Play cover was better than the game, but it remains an absorbing, if repetitious on occasion, RPG. Hmm.
Breath Of Fire 2	(US) Marubeni/Capcom	SP41	81% Although it has undeniable flaws, if you're a hardcore pointy-hat *BOF2* is an essential purchase.
Buggs Bunny Rabbit Rampage	(US) Sunsoft	SP19	58% You'll have a hoot picking out the Looney Tunes characters in here, but the platforminess around them spoils the fun.
Cannon Fodder	(UK) Virgin	SP28	89% We don't really like Amiga games on *Super Play*, but this is one exception. Topper action-based wargaming all the way.
Caravan Shooting	(JAP) Hudsonsoft	SP37	52% A collection of old coin-ops converted in such a fashion that you'll believe your SNES is in fact an 8-bit machine.
Carrier Aces	(UK) Gametek	SP34	39% Japanese kamikaze pilots would be insulted by this. (If they hadn't all killed themselves.)
Castlevania: Vampire's Kiss	(UK) Konami	SP35	80% Not as good as the original, but it does its best to replicate doses of that classic *'Vania* playability.
Champions World Class Soccer	(UK) Acclaim	SP19	66% Endorsed by Ryan Giggs (in the days he could play), this is a typically below-parr 'soccer' game from the States.
Charles Barkley Shut Up and Jam!	(UK) Sony	SP28	73% Sony Imagesoft Shut Up and Write a Proper Basketball game, more like...
Choplifter III	(UK) Ocean	SP18	80% Blatantly riding the retro wave, Beam (*Shadowrun*) Software's shoot-'em-up sequel is limited but dreamy fun.
Chrono Trigger	(US) Square	SP37	90% A paperback RPG to Square's *Final Fantasy* hardback epic. Wil loves it, of course, but then he loves everything RPG-ish.
Civilisation	(US) Koei	SP41	88% Proof that appearances really can be deceptive. A totally absorbing, but very complicated game.
Clayfighter 2	(UK) Interplay	SP28	87% A pretty beat-'em-up that is, unfortunately, a total gimmick from start to finish. (Can't wait to see the M2 version, arf!)
Cutthroat Island	(UK) Acclaim	SP42	66% Fair to middling scrolling slash-'em-up that tries to incorporate new ideas, but falls a little flat.
Death and Return of Superman	(US) Sunsoft	SP25	29% Licence + scrolling beat-'em-up = dreadful tat. Supey would turn in his grave. Or would he? We haven't a clue, frankly.
Demolition Man	(UK) Acclaim	SP36	75% An inventive, unpredictable licence platformer. What? Yeah, Tony recommends the zip-lines level. Oh he's so ker-razeee.

NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Demon's Blazon	(JAP) Capcom	SP27	80% Show-stopping graphics and a great bulging sack full of neat touches in a game that's a teeny bit too easy.
Dirt Racer SFX	(UK) Elite	SP31	51% A Super FX racing game and a pretty grim one at that. Not as good as this next feller...
Dirt Trax FX	(UK) Acclaim	SP38	77% Sculptured Software go Super FX potty once more to produce a natty motah-biking racer which lacks depth.
Donkey Kong Country	(UK) Nintendo	SP27	90% Ray-traced platform Kong fun that everyone got for Christmas, learning about gameplay/graphics the hard way.
DKC 2	(UK) Nintendo	SP40	82% A better game than the original, but not to an extent that would warrant an improved score – could do better.
Doom	(UK) Ocean	SP36	92% It is, as they say, *Doom* – but on the SNES. Most of the PC original's levels and features are present and correct.
Double Dragon V	(US) Tradewest	SP25	39% The first *Double Dragon* game was quite good. In the arcades. But part five on the SNES? Just look at the score.
Dragon	(UK) Virgin	SP21	88% More a clone of old beat-'em-ups such as *IK+* than *SFII*, and therefore not as enjoyable. Playable enough, though.
Dragon Ball Z 2	(JAP) Bandai	SP17	75% Though the score suggests an above average game, looking back on *DBZ2* it's little more than a dull, quirky beat-'em-up
Dragon Ball Z 3	(JAP) Bandai	SP27	70% *DBZ3* is to *DBZ2* what *DBZ2* was to *DBZ1*. Got that? Er, the series got better as it went on, but never brilliant.
Dragon View	(US) Kemco	SP35	68% An infuriatingly entertaining RPG awash with compounded minor flaws. Bit of a love it/bear it-type scenario, we reckon.
Earthbound	(US) Nintendo	SP35	88% A crude-looking but startlingly different and entertaining RPG set in childhood America. We'll love it forever.
Earthworm Jim	(UK) Virgin	SP29	91% He hasn't got a leg to stand on and he's got no backbone (*Dis-flaming-missed! – Ed*), but he's in a very fine platformer.
Earthworm Jim 2	(UK) Virgin	SP39	85% An excellent sequel albeit with perhaps fewer surprises on offer than that of the original *Jimmer*.
ESPN Speed World	(US) Sony	SP28	60% A depressingly dull racer, despite apparently having more options than God.
Excite Stage '95	(JAP) Epoch	SP34	77% An improvement over the original *ES*, but not one we'd recommend with the likes of *ISSD* and *FIFA* around.
Eye of the Beholder	(US) Capcom	SP21	52% Poor first-person-viewed *Dungeon Master* sequel which incurred the Might Wrath of the Zyster when he reviewed it.
Fatal Fury 2	(UJAP) Takara	SP19	79% Tired by its desperate strivance for membership of the *SFII* Club, Zy rightly judged this to be lacking that certain spark.
Fever Pitch	(UK) US Gold	SP32	78% A passable, meat-and-potatoes footy game. It's supposed to have a humorous twist, but we're buggered if we saw it.
FIFA	(UK) Electronic Arts	SP20	89% An enormous hit on the Mega Drive, this SNES conversion is an accurate one. Looking rather dated these days.
FIFA '96	(UK) Electronic Arts	SP37	84% So what do yez get fer yer '96-ness? Better graphics, tiny speech samples and some new options. Is that enough?
Fighter's History	(US) Data East	SP22	85% Blatant 'homage' to *SFII* and instigator of the famous Capcom vs Data East lawsuit. A very proficient clone in fact.
Final Stretch	(JAP) LOZC	SP19	73% Obscure F1 racing affair which boasted a DSP chip in order to calculate some clever 3D-esque views of the action.
Final Fantasy III	(US) Square Soft	SP26	96% Truly a God among RPGs, making yer average SNES title look about as appealing as an evening with Terry Wogan.
The Firemen	(JAP) Human	SP29	75% A tricky squirt-'em-up that's taxing if not all that original. Run round, *Ghoul Patrol*-style, extinguish fires and rescue folk.
The Flintstones	(US) Taito	SP20	54% The plan: nick some bits from *Mario* and stick 'em together for our own game. The result: a tired, challengless example.
Foreman For Real	(UK) Acclaim	SP37	40% A licence with slick graphics and precious little in the way of gameplay. Fatty should sit down and shut up.
Frantic Flea	(UK) Gametek	SP39	29% Painfully, nay, excruciatingly annoying platformer albeit with nattily produced graphics.
Front Mission	(JAP) Square	SP31	88% Isometric turn-based stategy wargame with enough pace and action to make a two-hour battle just fly by.
Full Throttle Racing	(UK) Gametek	SP26	55% Pretty grim racing game offering a weird mix of Mode 7 jetskiing and traditional motorbiking action.
Ghoul Patrol	(UK) JVC	SP30	82% Not up to the standard of its prequel, *Zombies Ate My Neighbours*, but pretty close. Good B-movie-parody fun.
Goemon 2	(JAP) Konami	SP17	90% Sequel to groundbreaking Legend Of Mystical Ninja with a heavier action slant but all its playability and charm.
Goemon 4	(JAP) Konami	SP41	82% While showing signs of age, *Goeman 4* nevertheless provides an Aladdin's Cave of 'only in Japan' videogaming.
Hagane	(UK) Virgin	SP32	74% A surprise UK release, this platform actioner from Hudson Soft is very Japanese, and entertaining and tough with it.
Hammerin' Harry	(JAP) Irem	SP23	77% If we had a hammer we'd hammer all over this game for not living up to what was expected from it. Oh yes.
Hardball 3	(US) Accolade	SP24	69% Let's make another baseball game! Let's make it similar to the others! Let's get the general thumbs-down from *Super Play*!
Hebereke's Popoon	(UK) Marubeni	SP27	84% Addictive *Puyo*-twist with mad fings. What's a popoon? What's going on with the seemingly random features?
Humans	(UK) Gametek	SP18	70% Uses one of the worst dreign approaches possible, the blatant rip-off (*Lemmings*) and stumbles along determinedly.
Hungry Dinosaurs	(UK) Sunsoft	SP40	35% Has all the visual hallmarks of a classic puzzler, but just doesn't cut it. Mildly entertaining.
Illusion of Gaia	(US) Nintendo	SP26	88% Well-produced pseudo-sequel to *Soulblazer* with a great atmosphere to boot. Far from very challenging, though.
Indiana Jones	(UK) JVC	SP30	29% A grim platform exploration affair which embodies everything that's wrong with licensed games.
Inspector Gadget	(US) Nintendo	SP18	71% Yes, Nintendo did release this – perhaps they were short on products, 'cos this is a less than glorious platformer.

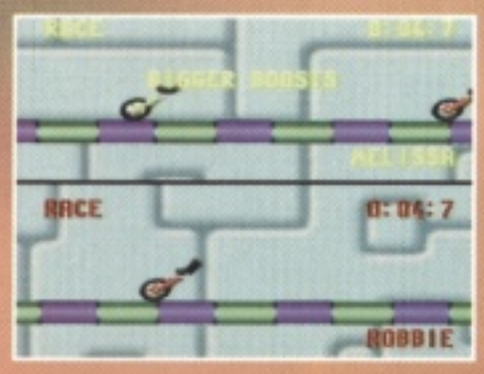
NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
International Superstar Soccer	(UK) Konami	SP30	92% Blimey! A soccer game that scores over 75%! Great dynamic sprites and quick action make this highly enjoyable.
ISS Deluxe	(UK) Konami	SP38	94% Improved over the original in just about every single respect, this goes to prove Konami's continued mastery of the SNES.
James Pond 3	(UK) US Gold	SP32	77% A *Mario* rip-off which came along about two years too late. It has its clever bits but feels like a clone from start to finish.
Jelly Boy	(UK) Ocean	SP25	61% Frustrating platformer whose selling point is that your character can morph into different objects. Yawn...
Fever Pitch	(UK) US Gold	SP32	78% A passable, meat-and-potatoes footy game. It's supposed to have a humorous twist, but we're buggered if we saw it.
The Jetsons	(US) Taito	SP23	76% The sort of platformer that Tony was always lumbered with. This had one or two pleasant surprises in store, though.
Jim Power	(US) Electrobrain	SP23	70% Imagine the most garish European-produced Amiga game possible with a clever 3D glasses bit. That's *JP* alright.
Joe and Mac 2	(US) Data East	SP21	80% The graphics are jolly, by jingo, and the jungly caperings entertaining, but... there's... something... missing.
The Jungle Book	(UK) Virgin	SP21	82% One of two jungle-based platformers dumped on Tony in issue 21. Blimey, we were terrible to him in those days.
Jungle Strike	(UK) E/Arts	SP33	83% Nothing new for *Desert Strike* fans, but a worthy alternative for the rest of us. (Tony hates the series, for what it matters.)
Jurassic Park 2	(UK) Sony	SP27	83% A tough, varied game with a shade too much standard platforminess to make it a classic.
Justice League	(UK) Acclaim	SP34	30% A dreadfully implemented, poorly planned and unplayable beat-'em-up. Why do these things get made?
Kid Klown in Crazy Chase	(US) Kemco	SP27	80% If the entire game was up to the standard of its graphics (they're brill), this would be a classic game. They're aren't.
Kick Off 3	(UK) Anco/Imagineer	SP20	91% Did you know that Anco comes from ANil Gupta (its MD) COmpany? You didn't? We overrated this one incidentally.
Kikikaikai 2	(JAP) Natsume	SP23	79% The sort of game that'll always find a place on our cover, this is fun, very Japanese, but too much like its predecessor.
King Of The Monsters 2	(JAP) Takara	SP17	74% Neo Geo conversion which sets Godzilla-esque monsters against one another in varied settings. Very limited action.
Kirby's Avalanche	(US) Nintendo	SP33	91% *Puyo Puyo* finally goes west in the form of the pink blobster. One of the most addictive and downright fun games ever.
Kirby's Tea Shop	(JAP) Nintendo	SP28	86% Er, sorry, that's *Tee Shot*, actually. It's an odd little golf-type game for odd little gamesplaying people.
Knights of the Round	(US) Capcom	SP21	51% One of the games which started asking questions of Capcom's output, this is a very run-of-the-mill scrolly slasher.
Legend	(US) Seika	SP22	55% Slick but dull slasher. (So baffled, was the designer, by its score that he felt the need to visit us and say so.
Lemmings 2	(UK) Psygnosis	SP26	88% Repeatedly kill even more cute (or rather save) little fluffy creatures in yet more interesting ways.
Lester The Unlikely	(US) Nintendo	SP18	52% Another unlikely (yeah, sorry) Nintendo release that had all the charm of a spent teabag.
Lethal Enforcers	(UK) Konami	SP17	69% Top *Reservoir Dogs*age awaits in this conversion of Konami's exciting but short-lived coin-op blaster.
Liberty Or Death	(US) Koei	SP22	41% Why does Zy do it? Another wargame that withered and wilted under his unflinching glare.
The Lion King	(UK) Virgin	SP29	82% A polished, if not all that innovative platform licence of a film who's name eludes me.
Loderunner Twin	(JAP) T&E Soft	SP24	55% Such potential. Such lack of the finer points of gameplay. Ex-editor James Leach didn't go a packet on this platformer.
Lord of the Rings	(UK) Interplay	SP29	52% A huge, detailed, wandering game ruined by gaping gameplay gaffs. (Some of the music's quite nice, though.)
Lufia and the Fortress of Doom	(US) Taito	SP18	79% If Japanese-produced RPGs work to a template then *Lufia* exemplifies it. While generally sound its sooo predictable.
Madden NFL '95	(UK) E/Arts	SP26	84% Nothing's really changed since *Madden '94*, which isn't really a bad thing, of course. (Er, so long as you enjoyed it.)
Magic Boy	(UK) JVC	SP21	75% Lacks the finesse of its Japanese counterparts but has a fair stab at shaking some puzzly platformy stuff.
Mario's Time Machine	(UK) Mindscape	SP17	60% One of the only 'edutainment' titles on the SNES. Hardly surprising, really: gamers want to be entertained not taught.
Mario's Picross	(UK) Nintendo	SP39	77% Quirky puzzler based on the theme of considered deduction. Chipping away pictures has never been, well, done, actually.
Mary Shelley's Frankenstein	(US) Sony	SP28	69% Well she isn't pretty, but... there's no need to be personal. Bad platformer of an okay film of an excellent book.
The Mask	(UK) THQ	SP38	70% Marginally shallow platform licence fun. Morphs a-plenty ensure variety if not thrills.
Mechwarrior 3050	(UK) Marubeni	SP28	77% Power-crazed destruction on two legs, with some stunning animation but a depressingly short lifespan.
Mega-Lo-Mania	(UK) Imagineer	SP19	81% Engrossing wargame that endeared itself to the Leachster for some reason. Impressive use of speech though.
Mega Man 7	(UK) Marubeni	SP38	79% A reasonable update of the NES and Game Boy instalments of the series, which lacks the spark needed to make it shine.
Mega Man X	(US) Capcom	SP17	88% A fine spin-off from the NES games, which dated horribly upon the release of Nintendo's far superior *Super Metroid*.
Mega Man X2	(US) Capcom	SP30	80% Loaded with Capcom's C-4 co-processor, we expected more from *X2*. It's merely more of the same with a couple of frills.
Mega Man X3	(JAP) Capcom	SP42	70% Capcom are cashing in. It's a good game, but there are none of the new ideas we were hoping for in part two.
Metal Marines	(UK) Namcot/Mindscape	SP18	80% Turn-based isometric-viewed other-hyphenated-stuff wargame which proves a lot more shallow than expected.
Michael Jordan	(UK) E/Arts	SP29	83% A platform game based on basketball. The expected ice hockey flight sim sequel never appeared, strangely.

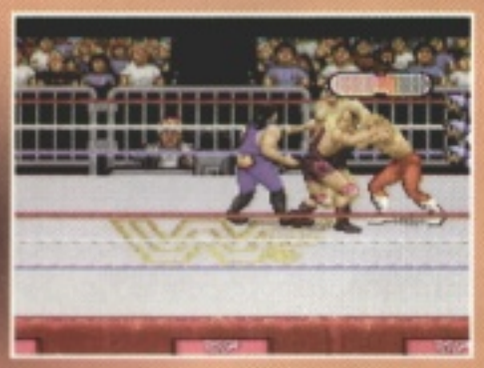
NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Mickey's Magical Quest	(UK) Capcom	SP3	89% Super-slick platformer with graphics to make a mess over. What a pity that it's all over so soon.
Mickey and Minnie	(UK) Capcom	SP27	73% We don't understand the release of this – apart from having a two-player mode it's almost identical to *MMQ*. (And easier.)
Mickey Mania	(UK) Sony	SP26	87% There've been few technically stunning SNES games to come out of the UK, but this is one. Plays fine, looks amazing.
Mickey's Ultimate Challenge	(US) Hi-Tech	SP20	54% One for the younger viewers, as Hi-Tech would be sure to claim. Simple platform bits give way to tedious mind games.
Micro Machines	(UK) Sony	SP26	83% An overhead racer that looks bad, sounds awful, but plays wonderfully. Shame about the presentation.
Micro Machines 2	(UK) Ocean	SP39	88% A great big fat extra wodge of what made the original such a superlative racer. Some of the tracks with drive you nuts.
Mortal Kombat 2	(UK) Acclaim	SP24	90% Realising their grave error, Acclaim brought just about everything across from the coin-op in this sequel. It's fun.
Mortal Kombat 3	(UK) Acclaim	SP37	85% A well-balanced coin-op conversion that would have benefitted from a tad more attention to detail.
Mr Tuff	(UK) Ocean	SP32	74% A few more sprites fall into Ocean's platform game machine. A squirrel, though... why?
Muscle Bomber	(JAP) Capcom	SP22	78% Enormously entertaining wrestling game (in the short term), with skillo four-player mode and great graphics.
NBA Give 'N' Go	(UK) Konami	SP38	85% Arcade-style b-ball title using a clever mix of Mode 7 and jumbo-sized sprites. Not quite as much fun as *NBA Jam*.
NBA Jam Tournament Edition	(UK) Acclaim	SP30	90% A few well-placed tweaks on the superb original, NBA Jam. Fast, and even more arcadey –top for two players.
NBA Live '95	(UK) Electronic Arts	SP26	84% A good basketball game that calls for a fair bit of hoop-shooting skill.
NBA Live '96	(UK) E/Arts	SP37	78% Good basketball fun, but this is more of a sim and not up to *NBA Jam*'s hoop-burning standards.
New Horizons	(US) Koei	SP28	62% "Normal people should flee in terror." Said Zy to this poor sea-bound strategy sleep-inducer.
Newman-Haas Indycar	(UK) Acclaim	SP27	73% Non-mode 7 racer! Nigel Mansell! Dagen Haas? Pretty good sim of Formula One's boring US cousin.
NFL Quarterback Club '96	(UK) Acclaim	SP40	89% Boasting more depth than *Madden* and now significantly improved both on the field and presentation-wise.
NHL '94	(UK) E/Arts/Ocean	SP22	89% For some reasons, ice hockey is one of the easiest sports to make into a playable game, something this game proves ably.
NHL '96	(UK) E/Arts	SP37	90% *NHL* gets better every year, but this isn't a viable replacement for *NHL '95* owners.
NHL Stanley Cup	(US) Nintendo	SP18	79% Before doing *Doom* for Williams, Sculptured did this Mode 7-mad ice hockey sim for Nintendo. And it ain't bad.
Nosferatu	(JAP) Seika	SP27	75% The banana peel was replaced with a severe lack of originality. The game still tripped over it.
Obelix	(UK) Infogrames	SP36	60% Average. Run-of-the-mill. Boring. Flawed. True to the looks of the original *Asterix* books, enlivened by okay sub-games
Operation Europe	(US) Koei	SP24	46% If you bought your SNES to play wargames then you might squeeze something out of this. Don't bother otherwise.
Ogre Battle	(US) Enix	SP34	80% A fantasy strategy game that's fun if not altogether varied, but employs a solid real-time feature.
Pac-Attack	(UK) Namco/Nintendo	SP21	69% It didn't take long for the *Puyo Puyo* clones to begin arriving and this is a spot-on example of how to not get it quite right.
Pac-Man 2	(US) Namco	SP35	70% A frustrating, picky platform game that's nearly good enough to get away with it.
Parodius 3	(JAP) Konami	SP41	83% As slick as ever and truly funny in places, but nothing innovative. Just timeless blasting gameplay.
The Pagemaster	(UK) Virgin	SP29	61% Oh please, someone mess up that Culkin kid's face. Speccy kid with books in pointless platformer.
Phantom 2040	(UK) Viacom	SP38	78% Pacing, storyline and depth drag this licence platformer out of the 60% band.
Pac-Man 2	(US) Namco	SP35	70% A frustrating, picky platform game that's nearly good enough to get away with it.
PGA Tour '96	(UK) T•HQ	SP42	85% Lots of options, plenty of holes and a steep learning curve make for a top notch simulation.
Pinball Dreams	(UK) Tecmagik	SP17	76% What should have been a greatly-improved version of the Amiga hit turned out to be shoddily implemented and flawed.
Pink Goes To Hollywood	(UK) Activision	SP27	79% A bit of a mystery release, this, considering The Pink Panther went out with flares (again). Lightweight, floaty platform fun.
Power Drive	(US) US Gold	SP28	69% A bad Amiga mini-racing game makes its way to the SNES. Nobody cheers.
Pac-Man 2	(US) Namco	SP35	70% A frustrating, picky platform game that's nearly good enough to get away with it.
Populous 2	(UK) Imagineer	SP23	87% What is it with Imagineer and God-type games? Another of those Great-If-You-Like-That-Sort-Of-Thing™s.
Porky Pig's Haunted Holiday	(UK) Acclaim	SP40	72% A simple, formulaic platformer for kids that doesn't pretend to be anything else.
Primal Rage	(UK) T/Warner	SP36	60% An average conversion of an average arcade beat-'em-up. With big dinosaurs.
Putty Squad	(UK) Ocean	SP32	89% Be like this, other platform games. Being, literally, putty, your character can do things other platform heroes can't.
Puzzle Bobble	(JAP) Taito	SP34	84% Like all great puzzle games this is a simple idea which is especially fun in two-player mode.
Ren and Stimpy: Time Warp	(UK) THQ	SP28	51% Say this: "Steeempy, you eediot! You wrote a dull scrolling beeeat-'em-up!" and avoid this awful offering.
Revolution X	(UK) Acclaim	SP41	45% It belongs in an arcade where you can blast away for ten minutes and then play something else.



NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Raccoon Rascal	(JAP) NCS/Masiya	SP21	79% Obscure puzzler starring arguably the cutest critter to ever appear in a game. Especially fun in two-player mode.
Rainbow Bell Adventures	(UK) Konami	SP18	70% The score's perhaps a little harsh on this distinctive two-player platformer, but it's nonetheless below-par Konami.
Ranma 1/2: Hard Battle	(JAP) Rumic Soft	SP21	79% All the *Ranma* faves are present in what proves to be a rewarding beat-'em-up. Still some way short of *SFII*, mind.
Rise of the Phoenix	(US) Koei	SP32	46% A trudging historical battle strategy game that's inaccurate historically and as a representation of war strategies.
Rise of the Robots	(UK) Acclaim	SP29	33% One of the most expensive, over-hyped disappointments since, erm, the last one. Over-rated at 33%.
Robotrek	(US) Enix	SP31	72% A polished but unoriginal RPG, just like too many games to come out of Enix. The robot-manufacturing bit is clever.
Romance of the 3 Kingdoms III	(US) Koei	SP20	67% And still the Zyster played insipid Koei wargames, finding this particular example suited solely to hardcore anorak fans.
Romance Of The 3 Kingdoms V	(US) Koei	SP37	68% Armchair anorak strategy that could be a lot better and frankly involves little romance.
Samurai Spirits	(JAP) Takara	SP28	84% A beat-'em-up that isn't quite as diverse as you'd expect from a 24meg game.
Sea Quest DSV	(UK) THQ	SP30	74% A shoot-cum-swim-cum-budget-'em-up. Though underwater thrills may work okay on the telly, they don't here.
Secret of Evermore	Square	SP39	81% A fine action RPG whose faults come horribly to light if you've played *Mana*.
Separation Anxiety	(UK) Acclaim	SP40	58% A plodding, directionless scrolling beat-'em-up that's fun in two-player mode, but does Spidey few favours.
Sink or Swim	(UK) Titus	SP31	55% Repetitive *Lemmings*-style save-'em-up that's about as interesting as a Sunday afternoon on the Mary Celeste.
Smash Ball	(JAP) Characternsoft	SP23	82% "The Surprise Two-Player *Breakout* Clone Hit Of '95!" as our pals on *TOTAL!* might say. This is a fabby little thing.
The Smurfs	(UK) Infogrames	SP25	80% Challenging platform game stuffed to overflowing with little scary blue people who smile too much.
Soccer Kid	(UK) Ocean	S18	84% A daft idea it might be, but this is entertaining stuff (despite looking like so many typical Amiga games of the day).
Soccer Shootout	(US) Capcom	SP24	80% While hardly mouldbresaking, the Western version of *Excite Stage '94* is a playable silicon take on The Beautiful Game.
Soldiers of Fortune	(US) Spectrum Holobyte	SP18	89% Zy thinks this is fabbage, while Tony believes it to be nothing special at all. Essentially it's *Gauntlet* for the '90s.
Space Ace	(UK) Empire	SP17	58% Oh dear, another game that got us into 'trouble' because we gave it a mediocre score. Sorry, Empire, but this is nobby.
Space Invaders	(JAP) Taito	SP21	40% *Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders.*
Sparkster	(UK) Konami	SP25	89% It's an original, imaginative, entertaining, and fun platformer. Blimey!
Spawn	(UK) Acclaim	SP40	56% Just the sort of game you'll ponder over and then walk away from when it's skulking in the bargain bins for a tenner.
Spectre	(UK) Gametek	SP21	90% Horrendously overrated (even EMAP mags slagged it off) two-player polygonised tank combat game. 72% more like!
Speed Racer	(UK) Accolade	SP22	65% Did we ever tell you about the difficulty we had getting a review copy from Accolade? Were they scared of us?.
Spiderman	(UK) Acclaim	SP31	77% A rather linear but pleasing platformer featuring our arachnid ally.
Spiderman & The X-Men	(UK) Acclaim	S22	72% Tatty-looking platform beat-'em-up which fails to make best use of those soupy Marvel characters.
Spike McFang	(US) Bulletproof	SP24	82% Call us suckers for invention, but we couldn't resist Spike and his hat-luzzing action RPG antics, however short-lived.
Sports Illustrated Championship	(US) Malibu	SP19	70% This two-games-on-one-cart (American footy and baseball) package was a nice idea, but poorly realised.
Star Trek Bridge Sim	(UK) Interplay	SP29	77% A stunted, unenjoyable Trekker game, with the saving grace of being fairly well executed.
Star Trek: The Next Generation	(US) Spectrum Holobyte	SP21	39% Lots of pitiful subgames cobbled together to form something that even the saddest Trekker would struggle to enjoy.
Stargate	(UK) Acclaim	SP32	60% Good films make mediocre games. Atrocious films make... oh dear.
Street Racer	(UK) Ubi-Soft	SP25	91% A *Mario Kart*-style racer that pips its predecessor to the post. Odd split-screen four-player mode.
Super Battletank 2	(US) Absolute	SP19	43% Military hardware fetishist Cam Winstanley reviewed this in *Super Play* and even he was distinctly non-plussed with it.
Super Bomberman 3	(UK) Virgin	SP37	89% Excellent new multi-player and single-player touches keep The Most Addictive Game Ever™ going strong.
Super Chase HQ	(JAP) Taito	SP19	55% Loosely based on the coin-op of a similar name, this is strictly Mode 7 racing by numbers. Hugely disappointing stuff.
Super Cup Soccer 2	(JAP) Jaleco	SP19	60% If we had a tenner for all the weak footy games like this, we'd be at the pub now, not writing about them.
Super Drift Out	(JAP) Visco	SP34	45% An overhead racing game that, despite a course designer, is much too dull.
Super Dropzone	(UK) Eurocom	SP26	87% It's *Defender* all over again! Actually, it's *Dropzone* all over again, but that all amounts to the same thing.
Super Godzilla	(UK) Toho	SP25	39% Dreadful and boring stomp-'em-up. Destroy cities. Fight monsters. Don't buy this game.
Super Ice Hockey	(UK) Sunsoft	SP24	55% Like so many 'Super'-suffixed games, this fails to do the term any justice. But then *Average Ice Hockey* would be a bit silly.
Super International Cricket	(UK) Nintendo	SP33	77% That obvious problem of cricket not working on a computer shines through.
Super Metroid	(UK) Nintendo	SP20	92% This is the reason Gumpei Yokoi still holds his head high after the disappointing Vitual Boy. Buy this game. Buy two copies.

NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Super Morph	(UK) Sony	SP30	86% Intriguing puzzle-orientated fun straight from the Amiga. The hero morphs between states in a platform adventure.
Super Ninja Kun	(JAP) Jaleco	SP25	68% A pretty, occasionally enjoyable game that plays like the Encyclopedia Britannica.
Super Pinball: Behind The Mask	(JAP) Meldac	SP19	73% "Tony, would you like to review this nice-looking but dull pinball sim?" "No, but no other bugger's going to...".
Super Punch Out!!	(UK) Nintendo	SP27	90% Original and surprisingly top boxing game! Cartoony looks and plenty of skills needed to overcome a variety of opponents.
Super Return of the Jedi	(UK) JVC	SP30	79% A huge but repetitive platformer just like so many others. Despite faithful graphics the film's atmosphere isn't recreated.
Super Street Fighter II	(JAP) Capcom	SP23	96% Although most SNES-owning hardcore *SF* enthusiasts prefer *Turbo*, this remains one hell of a beat-'em-up.
Super Troll Islands	(UK) Gametek	SP20	70% The idea's pretty straightforward – colour in the platform backdrops – the graphics are cacky. Overall it's basic gaming.
Super Turrican	(UK) Ocean	SP31	84% A short journey into the depths of a classic floppy title, with more besides.
Suzuka 8 Hours	(JAP) Namcot	SP19	59% Without the sit-on bikes of the coin-op, but *with* some horribly unwelcoming gameplay, this is best left alone.
Syndicate	(UK) Ocean	SP26	80% Unfortunately it's been cut down for the SNES, but it's still the isometric strategy game of the gods.
T2: Judgement Day	(UK) Acclaim/LJN	SP19	52% The only SNES game with a naked Arnie sprite – but hardly worthy of attention because of it, we hope you'll agree.
TAO Batman & Robin	(UK) Konami	SP25	80% A haphazard mish-mash of gaming styles that only just come together.
TAO Mighty Max	(UK) Sony	SP28	83% Cartoon licence and a youngster in a baseball cap make for... a surprisingly good strategy platformer.
Tetris Battle Gaiden	(JAP) Bullet Proof	SP18	86% Excellent reworking of the *Tetris* concept with magic spells, cute characters, the lot. Sterling straight *Tetris* mode, too.
Theme Park	(UK) Ocean	SP32	91% An excellent management sim from Bullfrog. Tough to get into but ultimately massively rewarding.
Time Cop	(UK) JVC	SP34	15% Appalling platform drudgery with no trace of gameplay. Flawed in every respect and kicked deservedly in by our Zy.
Time Trax	(UK) Malibu/T•HQ	SP20	73% Arriving at a time when T•HQ's rep was at an all-time low, this was a minor revelation for them. Not bad at all.
Tin Star	(US) Nintendo	SP33	61% A set of varied game styles building a rather linear, boring western. Not one we'd recommend.
Tintin In Tibet	Infogrames	SP39	25% Super-faithful graphics meet gameplay of the pumpular persuasion to grim effect.
Tiny Toons Wild & Wacky Sports	(UK) Konami	SP25	78% *Track And Field* 'update' for up to five players which only comes alive with that full player quota, frustratingly.
Troy Aikman NFL Football	(UK) E/Arts	SP26	77% If you know nothing about American footy, you're doomed to fail. No, at life in general.
True Lies	(UK) Acclaim	SP30	74% A carelessly-planned *Smash TV*-viewed explorer. Plenty of Arnie-esque blasting, but it's all a bit predictable.
Turbo Toons	(UK) Empire	SP36	42% Repetitive licence racing abound. There are no cars, just cartoon characters trundling and weaving, dalek-style.
Turn And Burn	(US) Accolade	SP20	71% Neat presentation fails to hide what is essentially a paper-thin flight sim/shoot-'em-up hybrid.
Ultima VI	(US) FCI	SP22	45% The Ultima series may be big on the PC, but this instalment made us gag. Notable for its odd, skewed overhead perspective.
Ultimate Parodius	(UK) Konami	SP27	85% A tribute to the original *Parodius*, though it doesn't show too many improvements.
Unirally	(UK) Nintendo	SP29	85% Acclaimed by everyone (Pope included), but unfortunately not as close to Godliness as his Holiness suggests.
Urban Strike	T•HQ	SP39	75% Retains that fine *Strike* playability but with clunky scrolling and stop-start gameplay.
Vortex	(UK) Sony	SP26	90% Super FX transforming battle-suit destruction makes for some of the best fun you can have with a torpedo.
Warlock	(UK) Acclaim	SP31	68% A bog-standard platformer, relying on spells to give it that vital spark. And they don't.
WeaponLord	(UK) Ocean	SP36	75% A below-par Street Fighter II crib with, believe it or not, some weapons but obviously no gore.
Wildsnake	(US) S/Holobyte	SP29	70% *Tetris*-inspired drop-'em-down puzzler with snakes of various lengths and colours.
Wolfenstein 3D	(UK) Imagineer	SP17	78% Before *Doom* – but on the SNES there was this: its simplistic forebear which offered absorbing, if short-lived, gameplay
World Heroes 2	(JAP) Takara	SP22	80% Takara have another bash at beating SFII and come off quite respectably. The feel's not quite right but it's smile-worthy.
Wolverine – Adamantium Rage	(UK) Acclaim	SP29	60% Apart from the brilliantly animated main sprite,there's absolutely nothing that distinguishes it at all.
World Masters Golf	(UK) Virgin	SP35	80% By no means perfect, but your best bet for golf on the SNES. Looks are acceptable and controls surprisingly pleasant.
WWF Raw	(UK) Acclaim	SP27	84% Theatrical WWF violence with knobs on, beating Royal Rumble. It's still all a bit silly, though.
WWF Wrestlemania	(UK) Acclaim	SP38	84% An amusing, if vaguely repetitive grappler. Only six WWF stars but plenty of silly moves.
X_Kaliber 2097	(US) ACtivision	SP20	68% Platform hack-'em-up most memorable for its 'real band' music (it's pumpy) and a villain by the name of Spuke.
X-Men Apocalypse	(JAP) Capcom	SP29	52% SNES rule 183: All *X-Men* games are humdrum, horizontally-scrolling beat-'em-ups. Alphabetical order, mind.
Yoshi's Island	(JAP) Nintendo	SP36	94% Yoshi takes the lead in what at first appears to be the best *Mario* game yet. It's certainly close between this and *SMW*.
Zoku: The Legend Of Bishin	(JAP) Magifact	SP19	58% The idea's fab (drive somewhere and have a big fight), but the driving bit is confusing and the fighting horribly limited.





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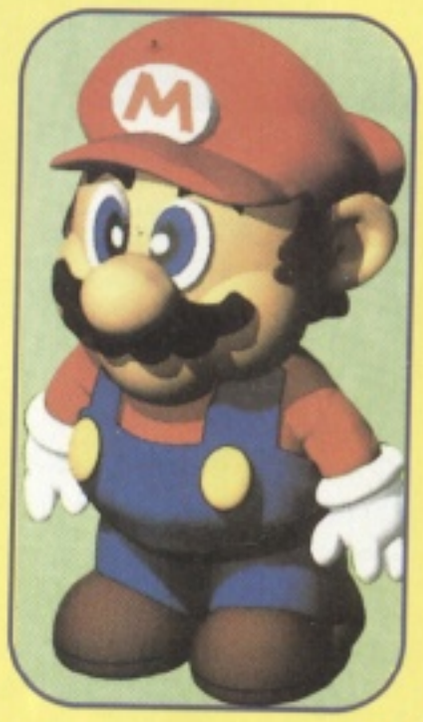

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